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WOMEN'S WEEKLY

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AUSTRALIAN SOLDIERS marching to the strains of a patriotic song.

FAMOUS TUNES that STIR THE EMPIRE!

Nation's patriotic fervor expressed in marches and songs

WHEN the Empire goes to war, it marches to music. Everywhere bands, orchestras and radios are playing the well-known marches and songs.

Music is inseparable from the patriotic spirit which sends thousands to fight for their country.

Who is not stirred when a column of Australian troops swings along a

city street to the music of massed bands?

Most of the songs we are hearing to-day are those we heard in the last war, but if the war we are in now continues there are bound to be plenty of new ones.

There is no better recruiting medium than a first-class patriotic song with a swing to it and words that can be easily remembered.

That was proved in the last war. For solemn occasions, of course,



GRENADIER GUARDS bandmen wearing the famous bearskins. Picturesque uniforms worn on parade are replaced by regulation khaki in wartime. Above, centre: Royal Australian Artillery band during a ceremonial parade. At top: Drummer in full uniform.

"God Save the King" and "Advance Australia Fair" will always be the rule, but there is a wonderful array of popular numbers ideally suited for the present situation.

When Captain "Skipper" Francis wrote his famous "Australia Will Be There," little did he think that the very words he used in the song,

On land or sea, wherever you be,
Keep your eye on Germany,
would be appropriate in another big war a quarter of a century later.

One of the most popular war songs still well remembered throughout the Empire is "Keep the Home Fires Burning."

The composer was Ivor Novello, the well-known actor-playwright and producer. He is said to have had doubts whether the words would "go down" with soldiers who had been singing some of the more "hard-boiled" songs such as "Mademoiselle from Armentieres," but his fears were soon dispelled when the song began to sell in thousands.

"It's a Long Way to Tipperary" came into favor immediately on the outbreak of war in 1914, and it was sung by the first British troops to meet the German onslaught.

Soon it was being sung throughout the Empire. There was something "homey" about its references to Ireland, Piccadilly, and Leicester Square—to say nothing of "Irish Molly-o!"

HUMOR and sadness are found in the old war songs sung by those who had to stay at home.

Most of us remember at least some lines of the popular "Sister Susie's Sewing Shirts for Soldiers."

An American song which had a great vogue in the music halls began: How ya gonna keep 'em down on the farm After they've seen Paree?

When America came into the war, we heard:

Over there! Over there!
Send the word! Send the word to beware!
We'll be over, we're comin' over,
And we won't come back
Till it's over over there.

Women especially will remember

the tragic but courageous "Rose that Grows in No Man's Land."

Another which many will remember begins:

Knitting, knitting, knitting
With a prayer in every row...

There is still a wealth of feeling in that other popular number:

Smile a while, and kiss me sad adieu,
When the clouds roll by I'll come to you.

ONE of the greatest Empire songs of all is Elgar's "Land of Hope and Glory."

To most of us it has something in it wonderfully expressive of British freedom, justice and power.

To hear a great choir sing it, or crowds waiting in the street on some historic occasion, is a never-to-be-forgotten experience.

Outstanding among British marches is the famous "British Grenadiers," heard now throughout Australia over the air as introductory music to broadcasts from England.

Thousands of Australians thrilled to it not long ago when it was played here by the Grenadier Guardsmen themselves during their visit for Melbourne's Centenary celebrations.

Most famous of all patriotic songs, "The Marseillaise," is to-day gripping the hearts and imaginations of millions of Frenchmen.

Written by Rouget de l'Isle in the dark days of the Revolution, it expresses the unquenchable will of the Frenchman to retain his freedom.

To arms, to arms, ye brave!
Th' avenging sword unsheath!
March on, march on,
All hearts resolved
On liberty or death!

Both words and music were composed in one night.

De l'Isle was a captain of army engineers who happened to be quartered at Strasbourg. The Mayor of the city pointed out that a good, rousing marching song was needed by the army, and De l'Isle's world-famous hymn was the result.

It was called "The Marseillaise" later on because of the indescribable enthusiasm it aroused when it was sung by troops setting out from Marseilles to Paris.

Let's Talk Of Interesting People



Clerk of the weather

AS Director of the Air Ministry Meteorological Office, Mr. N. K. Johnson knows more about the weather in Great Britain than any one. His staff of eight hundred men scattered all over the North Hemisphere, sends reports twice daily. From these Mr. Johnson and his assistants work out weather forecasts. Frequently important events wait on his word. He "ordered" the weather for the flight of the British bombers to Australia last year.



Air Force director

MISS J. TREFUSIS FORBES is one of the thousands of women all over Great Britain working hard with the new Auxiliary Services. She has been appointed to the Air Ministry as director of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force, the new women's service recently approved by the King.



High Commissioner

MR. F. B. SAYRE, U.S.A. Assistant Secretary of State, who has been nominated by President Roosevelt as next United States High Commissioner to the Philippines.

Mr. Sayre is opposed to reconsideration of the plan whereby the Philippines eventually become independent of America.

As High Commissioner, he intends to work for a solution of the Philippines' economic problems incidental to their attainment of independence.

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Why shouldn't you be glamorous too? You can give your skin such exquisite loveliness with Erasmic... the face powder originally created for beautiful titled women and lovely actresses in search of even greater loveliness. For sixty years Erasmic's cosmeticians have analysed, added, improved—and to-day Erasmic contains every beautifying powder ingredient known to the world. Start using Erasmic now. See how lovely it leaves your skin... ivory smooth... transparent... completely irresistible.



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Perfect powder base 1/4 oz. tube
ERASMIC COLD CREAM
Perfect cleansing cream, 1/4 tube
AT ALL CHEMISTS AND STORES
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SOME LOVELY WAR BRIDES . . .



SYDNEY'S first war bride, Mrs. Phillip Sautelle, formerly Miss Betty Hurley, of Neutral Bay. Her husband is in an anti-aircraft brigade.



MISS DAISIE OSBORNE, whose marriage to Peter Tait was put forward a month.



MRS. LANCE NEWBOUND had a dramatic midnight wedding at Laverton Aerodrome before her Air Force husband went on service.

Sweethearts called to the colors, these girls advanced wedding plans

While newspapers and radio bring news of battles in Europe, the wedding march is being played every day in hundreds of churches in Australia.

The first of the brides in Great War II—on the arms of their husbands—step bravely into the spring sunshine, and women win the first round of the conflict, Cupid v. Mars.

ALTHOUGH, unlike the early days of the Great War, no expeditionary force has been organised and only a comparatively small number of young men have been called up for war duties, a rush of marriages in churches and registry offices is breaking all statistical records for September.

For years September has been one of the least romantic months of the year. The most popular marriage dates are normally in Easter and Christmas weeks.

In normal times young couples usually plan an engagement of a year or more, but in wartime no one knows what the future holds.

Young couples who have planned to save up for several years to buy their homes and furniture are faced with the fear that they may soon be parted.

Rather than postpone their marriages to a problematical future they are postponing saving up for their own homes instead.

Sudden decision

GIRLS who had looked forward to gradually building their own homes filled with cherished possessions collected through the years are now prepared to start married life with no trousseau and no homes of their own, so that they may have a few months of married happiness out of the lonely years of war that may take their young husbands away from them.

Sydney's first war bride was probably Betty Hurley, only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. H. Hurley, of Neutral Bay. Her bridegroom, Phillip Sautelle, elder son of Mr. and Mrs. G.



MISS MARGARET TAIT rearranged her wedding date to Gordon Welsh for two days after her brother's wedding.

H. Sautelle, of Neutral Bay, is in the anti-aircraft brigade.

On September 1, when news of the first hostilities in Europe came through, they decided late at night that they would be married next day. Their wedding had been originally arranged for October 28.

The bridegroom's parents returned later that night from the Dental Congress in Melbourne, and agreed with their plans.

The next morning telephone arrangements were made with the minister for the ceremony to take place at 5 p.m. that day, and with the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron at Kirribilli for the reception.

The bride cancelled her wedding frock, and wore a tailored suit which she had bought for travelling. Instead of three bridesmaids, only one, Nan Sautelle, attended her.

Nearly a hundred guests were invited by telephone to the reception.

Several Sydney weddings which were arranged for October took place a few days after the declaration of war.

Ray Whitehead, of Mosman, was married to Brendan Barry, of Perth, last week instead of in October.

The wedding of Rosalind Bucknell, of Mungindi, to Richard Read, of Garah, was celebrated seven weeks earlier than they planned because the bridegroom is in the Light Horse at Garah.

The marriage of two very well-known young members of N.S.W. squatterocracy, Daisy Osborne and Peter Griffin Tait, both of Jugiong, was brought forward a month, and the bridegroom's sister, Margaret, planned her wedding two days after her brother's. Her bridegroom is Gordon Welsh.

The wedding of Mildred Howson, of Mosman, to Russell Clark, the novelist "Gilbert Anstruther" whose latest book, "Three Went West," was published recently, was to have taken place towards the end of the year. Owing to the war the wedding was celebrated quietly last week.

Because the bridegroom is in the Militia, the wedding of Rosalind Spence, of Killara, to Robert Vautin, of Lindfield, was put forward three months when they were married quietly last Friday.

Many of the war brides have had



ROSALIND BUCKNELL was married seven weeks earlier than planned to Richard Read, who is in the Light Horse at Garah.

quiet weddings, with only a few relatives present, and there has been no time to buy traditional bridal dress.

Others have been determined that wartime emergency will not rob the greatest day in their lives of its glamorous setting of bridal veil,

bridal retinue, flowers and wedding music.

Jessie Brookes, of Melbourne, for instance, who married Tony Clarke after a ten-day engagement, was married in a bridal frock and attended by three bridesmaids, and a big reception was given by her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Brookes. All the arrangements for the wedding were carried out in three days.

The marriage of Deborah Staughton and George Lansell at Terang (Vic.) was advanced because of the war.

The bridegroom, who holds a pilot's licence, is joining up with the Air Force, so the couple made up their minds to marry straight away.

Every girl dreams of wearing satin and tulle on her wedding day. This bride had no time to plan bridal finery, intended making do with street wear, but she looked lovely in the bridal frock and veil lent to her by her sister, Mrs. John Larritt.

The romance links two families of pastoral fame. The bride is the daughter of Colonel and Mrs. A. J. Staughton, Keayang, Terang, and the groom the only son of Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Lansell, of Chah Singh, Moulmein, New South Wales, and Lansellistow, Bendigo. He is a grandson of the late George Lansell, one of Australia's gold magnates.

"Duty comes first," says bride of Darwin airman

ONE of the first brides affected by the European conflict was Mrs. Lance Newbound, of Melbourne, whose husband, a sergeant-pilot in the Air Force, left for military duties at Darwin two hours after the couple were married at a midnight wedding at Laverton Aerodrome in Victoria.

There is no accommodation for the bride at Darwin, so she will remain in Melbourne.

"It's an unhappy situation, but duty comes first. I can now only look and long for the time when Lance comes back," said the little bride in an interview with The Australian Women's Weekly last week.

Young Mrs. Newbound is now trying to pick up the threads of her ordinary life and facing her problem with a practical courage to be admired.

After a four years' engagement this young couple (he is only 25 and she is 24) had planned to be married in December.

Plans for the wedding and happy rounds of pre-wedding parties were being made when suddenly the bridegroom-elect was called to duty.

Just before he left, the young couple decided to marry, and with only an hour's preparation, no

bridesmaids and no wedding dress, they had a romantic midnight wedding at the Laverton Flying School, and the bridegroom went away at dawn!

During the interview, Mrs. Newbound proceeded with the ironing of the frock she wore at her wedding, and it lay, a billowy mass of white-flowered organdie, on her bed at the home of her mother, Mrs. M. C. Baldock, in Malvern, where she is now living.

Wore dance frock

THE frock is really only a dance frock, and Patricia Muriel Baldock, as the bride was then, put it on when she went with her fiancé on the eve of his departure to a dance at Laverton Flying School to say good-bye to his friends.

He was due to depart for Darwin at dawn next morning. They arrived at Laverton about 11 o'clock in the evening.

"While we were saying good-bye, some of Lance's friends said, 'Why not get married now?' We made up our minds suddenly, and in little less than an hour the arrangements were made and the wedding took place at midnight."

GOODBYE..GREY HAIR!



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THE grey in your hair is not wanted—nor is it one of those evils that must be endured—any more! This inexpensive home treatment brings back the NATURAL colour to any hair—blonde, brunette or auburn. If it was auburn—to auburn it returns... if it was black—black it becomes and so on. There is NO repulsive off-shade appearance—for this natural home treatment is not a dye, and it is as simple to use as it is effective in treatment.

HERE'S WHAT TO DO

Just get a small box of Orlex Compound from your chemist and mix up with one ounce of Bay Rum, ¼ ounce Glycerine and one half-pint of water. This only costs a little. Comb the liquid through the hair every other day until the mixture

is used up. It is absolutely harmless, free from grease or gum, is not sticky and does not rub off. Itchy dandruff, if you have any, quickly leaves your scalp, and your hair is left beautifully soft and glossy. Just try this if you would look years and years more youthful.

ORLEX COMPOUND

TO-DAY'S DRAMATIC CHANGES on the FASHION FRONT

Frills and furbelows give way
to more practical clothes

From MARY ST. CLAIRE, by Beam Wireless

Now that we are at war, what clothes are we going to wear? This question has been quickly answered by the dress designers, who are staging a vigorous campaign on the fashion front.

The great fashion houses are getting us streamlined for war. To-day practical clothes are the mode.

THERE is a return to simple line with little trimming and there are cheerful and humorous disguises for such grim realities as gas-mask cases, or clothes that must be put on quickly in an air raid.

Gas-mask cases are covered to match ensembles, and made feminine with fittings for cosmetics.

With a brave challenge to air-raid

panic women will wear identity-disc wristlets as smart accessories.

Dressing for an air raid becomes a modish ritual in clothes trimmed and fastened with zip fasteners for speed.

Black-and-white is again a fashionable color scheme because white trimmings show up clearly in blackouts.

The practical realism of women, aided by the inspiration of the designers, ensures that clothes are adapted to wartime needs, but at the same time retain charm and femininity.

Fashion is as sensitive to war-time as the Stock Exchange.

The war of 1914-18 brought a fashion revolution.

At the beginning of the war skirts for both day and evening were ankle-length. Women wore impractical hobble and peg-top skirts and fetching but unmanageable hats ornately trimmed with feathers and flowers and balanced on velvet mounts.

By the end of the war skirts had shrunk to above the knees. The waistline had moved from the natural waist to the hips; and hats were severe pull-on shapes clinging firmly to the head.

The increased cost of materials and the fact that nearly every woman was engaged in war service or industry demanded utilitarian clothes.

An immediate effect of this on war fashion is a return to simple lines, depending on good cloth and cut for smartness.

Bustles, crinolines and low décolletages are now regarded as "pre-war."

In their place slim-fitting tailored coats, suits carrying very little trimming, dinner dresses with long sleeves, and high necklines will be worn.

Black-and-white will be most popular for the coming winter, splashes of white showing up clearly in blackouts.

Heavy tweeds in vivid checks with full skirts and coats showing deep

Paris fashions show military influence

By MARY ST. CLAIRE, Our
Special Representative in
England

THE war has had a marked influence already on Parisian dressing, and military modes are all the rage.

Military touches include the profuse use of gold braid, hat buckles in silver and gold made like miniature machine guns, suits, coats and even frocks with large gold or fur epaulettes.

Handbags are slung over one shoulder and across the chest like haversacks, kid gloves have deep gauntlets bearing naval and military badges embroidered on them in contrasting colors. Smart women are wearing elaborate jewelled gold or platinum identification bracelets.

unpressed pleats are smart, comfortable and practical, while Molyneux's super-swing skirt is quickly gaining popularity. Its freedom of movement enables women to slip easily out of "civvies" into their uniforms.

With most women engaged in some form of national service even-

ing clothes are at present hardly worn at all.
But later in the year, as the country gradually settles down to new conditions, the ultra-feminine note in evening wear will continue.

Already jewellery has taken on a new note. Accessories which were ultra-smart are giving place to lockets containing photographs of husbands, sweethearts or relatives.

They are the only adornment other than identity-disc wristlets which are made of silver, gold or platinum and inscribed with the owners' names and phone numbers.

Gas-mask cases matching ensembles are already replacing the cardboard box originally carried.

Zip fasteners are now the most popular fastening for dressing-gowns and housecoats, enabling women to slip easily out of bed and zip into their clothes during air raids.

Overalls of quilted silk modelled on the same lines as ski suits are a new idea for the evening.

Most of the designers are following Government orders to keep working as normally as possible.

Hartnell is showing at the end of September a small collection, while Molyneux is showing his new winter collection daily in his London show-rooms.

Most couturiers are already working with skeleton staffs, as tailors, cutters, and needlewomen have volunteered for Government work to make higher-grade uniforms.

Already designers in the big manufacturing houses are designing materials that are a gallant gesture to wartime.

Bright maps, little figures in national dress of different European countries, soldiers in uniform, and armaments are printed on cottons and silks.



'I don't like putting
blankets away dirty
but I daren't
wash them myself'



'Nonsense!
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as soft as new
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WITCHES' SABBATH

By I. A. R. WYLIE

ONE of the greatest stories of all time--written by a famous woman novelist who was born in Melbourne

"When I strike, it is like lightning in the night," boasts Hitler . . . This is how Nazi lightning struck at children in Germany . . . as it is now striking at the whole world



Illustrated by
WEP

The brown-clad man looked at Beni with cold angry eyes. They seemed to be drowning all the strength out of his body, so that he could hardly stand.

The fact was that Vogelstadt detested Buntersee, which was situated on the edge of the lake and had a station, and an hotel large enough to take in a hundred guests for the Sommerfrische, and gave itself airs. It talked of itself as the beauty-spot of southern Bavaria and boasted of its Aufluge and fishing. It never mentioned its mosquitoes. Whereas Vogelstadt was ten miles from any station and proud of it. It hadn't got an hotel. And it didn't want one.

The Gasthaus zum Grunen Laube had only two bedrooms so that if Sommergasten had come to Vogelstadt they would have had to go away again. Vogelstadt didn't want them, anyway. It was a self-sufficient, self-respecting town that had no need to kow-tow to a lot of good-for-nothing Groastadtlers. It had the best school in Southern Bavaria—hadn't Fraulein Adela travelled in France and England, and couldn't she speak the two languages just as fast as she could speak German?

A Burgermeister, a Wachtmeister, an Opotheke, a Metzger, and a specialty shop called "zum Neusten Parisen Moden," kept by Beni's father and mother, Herr and Frau Finkelbaum, and where everybody bought everything from thread to a smart dress for the great annual Kaffeeklatsch.

It was sheer impertinence for Buntersee—that hadn't even existed fifty years ago—to speak of Vogelstadt as it did, as a nest, a village.

But now, if Beni recaptured the silver medal for recitation, donated by some Konigliche Hohheit whom everybody had forgotten, Buntersee would have to take its proper place.

The great thing about Beni was his steadiness. When he stood up in class, his hands locked behind

his back, his small brown face very grave and his brown eyes very bright as though an inner fire shone through them, you felt quite sure of him. Sometimes Erna could do better. But she was flibbertygibbet, as Fraulein Adela said. And this morning she had been quite silly.

Really, she ought to be crying. But she stood there with the snow falling softly on her smooth fair hair, and munched her Butterbrochen with a faraway look in her blue eyes—as though she hadn't disgraced herself in the least. But when Beni came out of the school-house with his satchel already strapped to his shoulder, she turned and walked away.

"Fraulein Adela, says I can go home and tell father and mother!" Beni shouted. "And if I win there's to be a whole day's Ferien!"

under the trees—a secret place, full of shadowy enchantment, where they played together. They pretended that they were a brother and sister lost in a forest full of goblins and fairies. There were witches, too. But it was all right. In the end the goblins always saved them.

Perhaps she would never play with him again.

He stood on the school steps so that in the end she had to pass him. Her head was bent. She pretended not to see him, but he touched her arm shyly.

"Erna—you aren't angry, are you? I thought you'd be sure to win. You're usually so much better—"

She looked up at him. To his astonishment he saw she had not cried at all. Her blue eyes were warm and bright with impishness. Suddenly she bent forward and kissed him on the cheek.

"Dummechen!" she said. She had never kissed him before. She vanished into the schoolhouse.

Long Complete Story

There were shrill cheers, "Hurra for Beni!" Things like that made up for his being frail and dark and clever and somehow different. They began to gather snowballs and throw them joyfully at each other. Then the bell rang and recess was over.

But Beni waited. He wanted to rush home. But there was the small figure in the red woollen jacket, standing by itself, and paying no attention to anything except the last crusty fragment of the Butterbrochen. He had to speak to her first and tell her how sorry he was. He liked her better than anybody. She understood his quiet make-believe games. There was a place down by the river—

So there was nothing to do but run home with his books dancing on his shoulders.

As soon as she had settled Beni at his home-work, Leah Finkelbaum pushed her sewing into her basket and went out of the Wohnstube into the shop where Abe waited for customers. She had heard the bell go once already and it had been almost more than she could endure not to go out and hear what Abe and the Frau Doktor were saying to each other.

Darkness and quiet had settled on the Hauptstrasse. The snow lay so thick that though more townspeople were about than usual they made no sound. There was still a week

to Christmas. Business had been bad for many years, but not so bad as in the big towns. Not even so bad as it had been in Buntersee, which depended so much on the Sommergasten. Vogelstadt lived "off the land." And besides they were all neighbors. They did not talk much about it. But they stood together. It would never have occurred to any of them, for instance, to buy their presents from anybody but Abe Finkelbaum. So Abe had gone over to the Hauptstadt himself and had brought back a marvellous selection of Neugkeiten—not things that had been dug out and dusted Christmas after Christmas, but really new ideas—jokes to hang on the trees, and angels blowing trumpets and Christ-kinder of all shapes and sizes. Abe Finkelbaum loved children and the tender, appealing little wax figures warmed his heart and he took a secret delight in arranging them in different groups on the counter. It never struck him or anybody else that there was anything odd about it. The Finkelbaums were as Orthodox as they could be under the circumstances. Leah lit the ceremonial candles and said evening prayers, and for the great feast Herr Fels, the butcher, drove them in his cart to the Hauptstadt, ten miles away. His father had done the same for Grossvater Finkelbaum who had come to Vogelstadt on account of Grossmutter Finkelbaum's health. The Finkelbaums had been part of Vogelstadt ever since, and everybody, though not understanding them, respected the Finkelbaums' ideas about life.

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IT was the first snow. The children ran out into the school yard, screaming with joy. "Now it is almost Christmas!" they shouted.

Such an exciting morning. They couldn't stand still even to eat their Butterbrochen. Beni had been chosen out of the whole school to represent Vogelstadt. They had known all along that he stood a chance.

He was nearly always head of his class, anyway. But when it came to recitation there was only little Erna Herz who could do better. Usually she did. But this morning she had broken down—right in the middle of Joan of Arc's last speech—and no amount of prodding and whispering had got another word out of her. Whereas Beni's voice had rung out bravely right to the end.

Fraulein Adela had clapped her thin chilblained hands. She had said, "Bravo, Beni!" And the whole class had joined in unreproved—

"Bravo, Beni, bravo!" They were proud of him. Willy Voigt, who had a way of knowing things that nobody else knew, said that if Beni or anyone else won the silver medal for recitation away from Buntersee where it had been held—most unjustly—for three years by the snub-nosed, freckled and conceited Hildegarde Passe—the Burgermeister had promised to do something special. Something that had never been done by the town before.

And now, if everything went well, it would be done for Beni.

The TORNADO

Nance longed for some change to break the monotony of her life . . . but when it did come her first feeling was dismay.

IF only the kitchen had not been so well equipped, Nance thought resentfully, there would have been less for her to weary of; but every familiar jug and saucepan was an added symbol of the pointless domesticity she had come to detest. She had handled these things so often, taken them out and put them away again; they never ceased to claim her attention, especially since the kitchen of the wood and iron house was now used as a general living-room for herself and her father. The rest of the house had become characterless long ago, and the spirit of this room filled with things in too-constant use was oppressive and indestructible.

She almost wished that, now the drought had lasted so long, the whole place might be forfeited and she be rid of it. Of what use to her any longer were the once-loved far corners of the land, the paddocks and trees and watercourses, since she had no freedom for them? They could be gone altogether. But her father was too shrewd and provident and unspending to come to any extremity, either of good or ill; he would never lose this property, as the over-stocked and over-mortgaged Fisher next door would probably lose his.

She would be kept here for ever, and time would just go on and on, unbroken, without even a change in the crockery on the dresser—unless she married Peter Turnbull, who had kissed her so reprehensibly on Sunday. And now, to add to the insufferable boredom of her days, she desperately wanted to be kissed like that again, but not by the apologetic Peter Turnbull.

SHE stood in the middle of the kitchen twisting her hands as she thought of these things, till there was a step on the verandah. If that was Peter Turnbull coming back—but it was her father. He passed her by, intent on a search for matches, and having appropriated those she kept for lighting the fire he said, "How would you like to do a bit of droving again, Nance?"

It was not often that revolt was so quickly anticipated. Her hands relaxed. "Why?" she asked.

"Why? Because I was thinking we might just as well take that last mob out ourselves as pay a drover. There'll be nothing that need keep us here after they've gone. We can spare time now till it rains. So it'll be riding six miles a day and living on stock-route dust for a while."

Even this was momentary escape: to ride only the minimum distance that the law required one to travel sheep, to move only in the haze that followed the mob through a weary land—but still there might be some clear distance towards which one was already started; sheep and dust might somehow vanish on the way—"I'll be ready when you like," she said.

They started two days later. Droving with her father had been a commonplace experience of her girlhood, but despite this and the practical distractions of their setting forth, this time, when they came to the gate she felt the touch of the early autumn morning as disquieting as Peter Turnbull's embrace.

Looking back from the top of the hill against the sun, she could see the course of the fallen river half a mile away. Midway between, surrounded by paddocks bleached to the color of parchment, the deserted house sprawled on the flat top of a little rise, its wide verandahs and nakedness of all shelter making it look larger than it actually was. To the north, beyond a smoky line of fence, lay the property of the improvident Fisher; its big homestead

was beyond a hidden creek in the distance, but a smaller empty cottage near the boundary caught the sun on a corner of its iron roof. The whole prospect held nothing of life in her eyes; it was a little world bordering on no other, a world to itself, transfixed and hopeless. And it was the world she must inevitably return to.

"While it remains," she thought, with a sudden collapse of her earlier feeling, "I'll always be caught and brought back to it, and it will remain for ever. If only a cyclone or something would come and wipe it all out!" She turned away and rode on slowly into the belt of enduring trees that sheltered the stock route.

They were three weeks on the road when her father dropped dead in the saddle. He was buried in the yard of a little roadside church; then Nance, taking with her for the remainder of the trip a fourteen-year-old boy from this place, went on and delivered the sheep.

Their return to the boy's home was in a burst of wild weather and a downpour of rain that did not lift for a week. The boy's mother and sisters, strangers until now, kept her for this week, waiting on her with great cups of tea before the blazing fires where they dried her washed garments; they were kindly people by nature, but now they would have entertained the devil himself in the relief of the rain. When it ceased she took one rested horse and a few necessities in a saddle-bag and set off for home.

It seemed strange, when she started, to think that she was now going back there alone and not under compulsion, and yet she had no other immediate idea: she felt dulled, but not unhappy or bewildered. Since it had rained no one could say for a while to what extent that season's grass would grow; it all depended on whether the winter closed down early or the earth was allowed to retain its latent warmth for some time yet. If the soaked paddocks through which Nance rode could have felt any negative emotion arising from this uncertainty it would have been somehow in keeping with the girl's.

She drew towards home in the late afternoon. Though it had rained hard again the day before it was now so mild that the week of storms seemed far past. Overthrown trees

By WINIFRED BIRKETT

and the litter of broken boughs along the way were already being merged into the haphazard picture of the landscape, but more evident disorder was still to be seen: a mysterious sheet of iron and a large mail-box blown from its supports lay cast up, against a stump, and a wrecked hay-stack was strewn over a paddock; in several places the telephone line had been down and the earth was freshly rammed at the bottom of the re-erected poles, while new insulators and lengths of wire gleamed in the light.

Presently she came on the full track of the gale. It had been something in the nature of a tornado, a tearing wind that had lifted and thrown down everything possible along a straight belt of country half a mile wide and several miles long. Coming to the first torn clearing,

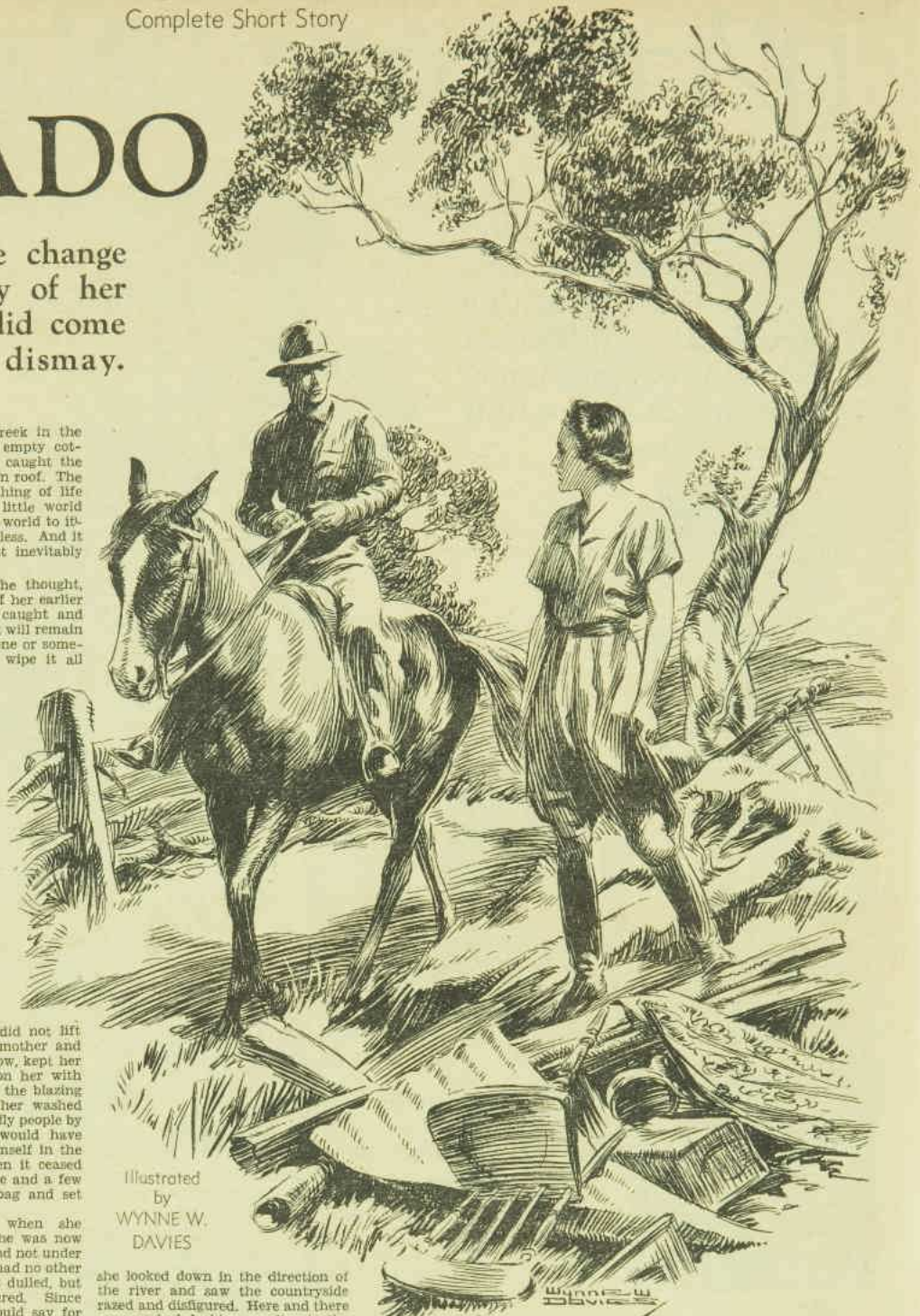
she looked down in the direction of the river and saw the countryside razed and disfigured. Here and there men worked, looking as alien to the desolation of their own paddocks as they might have seemed in the moon. There was something in man that could not be reconciled with ruin. She urged on her horse and rode over fallen rails to the property that was now her own.

The wood and iron house was gone. One might, by now, have expected some destruction here, but what completely astonished her was the fact of the whole place being so cleanly lifted away. Nothing of it remained but the foundations and the fireplaces. She drew up her

horse almost on the spot where it had stood.

And now she remembered that it was not so long since she had rebelliously wished for something like this to happen. The thing was doubly startling. Wishes, it seemed, if granted at all, were granted only too literally. Yet this abstraction was hardly to be digested along with the more urgent knowledge that she was without lodging for the night.

Neighbors were widely separated, a matter of miles in this district, and her father had been unfriendly to some. She could only throw herself on the hospitality of the Fishers, who would think the destruction of the house was a judgment on her for returning home alone. Well, granting that, there was certainly a defiant satisfaction in having brought about a tornado: the Fishers them-



Illustrated
by
WYNNE W.
DAVIES

Nance stared at the strange horseman in surprise. "I'm not the one you want," he explained. "I'm George Fisher's nephew."

seives, one felt sure, could not have done such a thing. Smiling to herself in the doubtful triumph of this thought, she rode on towards the boundary.

Here was further cause for astonishment. The small cottage once standing a couple of hundred yards from the fence had gone also, possibly reduced to an indistinguishable heap of litter just visible in the distance. Nearer lay the wreck of her own house and most of its contents broadcast over half an acre of ground; and from what appeared to be part of its material someone had erected a crazy structure like a large hut just beyond.

Nance threw her rein over a post of the mended fence and climbed through the wire. Between the fence and the hut the paddock was incredibly littered. On closer inspection she saw that in places among the debris things had been gathered together here and there and sheltered with pieces of iron, as if someone had made a perplexed effort to sort out and protect them, and then abandoned the hopeless task.

Now the time had reached that last short part of evening when the impatient dusk closes in, and within a few moments, it seemed, familiar objects still lying strewn about presented themselves for incongruous recognition before her eyes and then disappeared in the shadows.

While she stood there engrossed she heard the click of a horse's hoofs and the squeak of a new saddle ridden near, but she took little notice till they stopped beside her. It would be old George Fisher; she was thankful for that, she could go back home with him.

"Oh, Mr. Fisher," she began before she looked well at him. "Could I—"

But she was interrupted by a younger and pleasanter voice than she had expected. "That is my name, but I'm afraid I'm not the one you want." The man on the horse was a stranger.

Nance stared up at him. "I'm old George's nephew," he explained.

"Oh—how do you do? I'm Nance Barrett." Should she add, "And this is my house?"

The man on the horse, however, would probably recognise her name and know. She waited for his embarrassing condolences; but he only leant towards her and said confidentially, "I once had a big suitcase burst open all over a platform at Central Station; the contents seemed to cover an area even wider than this." He waved a hand across the darkening spot where the debris of the house was strewn. "Why are you laughing?"

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"I didn't know you were still at that stage," said Dale coolly, as they turned towards her in startled surprise.

VALIANT

• Long complete story of two beautiful women who were rivals for the love of a handsome young doctor.

By... MARY HOWARD

AS Leila sat up in bed, stretched her white arms and pushed back her shining fair hair, she was conscious of all the glad expectancy of a birthday coming. She should be used to it by now, yet every day it was a fresh, sweet joy to waken and find that it was true.

Leila looked at the room about her—the delicate, dignified room of blue and cream, and sighed. It was a pity, since it was such a satisfying home, that Geoff wasn't here more to appreciate it. That was one of the penalties of marrying a doctor. The practice had increased every day since they had settled at Dawton, and Geoff was getting a fine reputation for surgical work, in which he had once dreamed of specializing. And their social life seemed continually extending, so that Geoff needed more and more money.

So it had happened that his early ambitions, already on the wane before they had married, had been gradually pushed into the background, while his local success as a brilliant and understanding general practitioner had rapidly grown.

Leila had been happy, for Geoff's sake, that this transition had come painlessly, with no humiliating doubts of his own talents; for she had known before she married him that Geoff would never be a great specialist. Her own father, himself a famous specialist, had told her: "He lacks the single-mindedness and concentration to do the work he dreams of doing."

But she was glad he was successful, and quite honestly glad he was making money.

She had been sitting dreaming for ten minutes or more and Geoff showed no sign of stirring. She leaned across to his bed and shook him expertly.

"Sweetheart, it's twenty minutes to eight."

He sat up, rough-haired, wide-awake, and laughing.

"Holy smoke, nearly eight! And I must be out before nine! Race you for the first bath."

While Geoff was dressing, she bathed and dressed, putting on a little navy dress with a gay scarlet scarf at the neck, and scarlet sandals. She gave her reflection a final half-critical, half-approving glance, and went down to breakfast.

The dining-room faced south, and by Leila's ingenuity seemed to have caught more than its rightful share of sunshine.

Geoff sat down and sorted his letters, picking up a large, official-looking envelope with sudden, eager interest. Leila thought how attractive he was, brown-faced, blue-eyed, his keen boyish face serious in repose. She met his eyes and a little eager question came to hers.

"Ah!" he said, with an attempt at casualness.

She slipped round the table and put her arm across his shoulders. "Look quickly, darling, I can't bear the suspense."

He ripped open the envelope, scanned its contents, and his face lit up boyishly. "I've got it," he exulted.

"You've got the appointment!"

"It means an extra two hundred

year, and think what we can do with it!"

She laughed. "Silly! How about saving!"

"Don't be a damper, wretch."

"I'm not, just a suggestion. Darling, do let's have breakfast before it gets cold."

HE said as she sat down again: "I'm dying to tell Dale about this. Coming back here with an American reputation, she'll look down on me as a stuffy country doctor. I'm glad I've one appointment to swank about, anyhow."

"Oh, yes," she said slowly. "Dale."

In the excitement over the letter she had forgotten that Dale was arriving to-day. Brilliant Dale, specialist in women's nervous diseases, a rising figure at the Halden Institute, New York. Dale, who had been brought up with Geoff as his sister, but to whom he had for a few short months been engaged. Dale Rodney, of whom she was somehow afraid.

Leila knew she was being absurd. For there was nothing whatever to be afraid of. It was all ancient history, as far back as when Dale and Geoff were still students in their early twenties at a big city hospital.

She said slowly, "Oh, yes, she'll be interested. She's been doing such great things in New York. There seems to be so much opportunity for

women in America. I'll be glad to see her again."

It was true enough. She would be interested to see what America and success had

made of that raw, dominating girl she had known; the girl who had broken her engagement to Geoff as though it had been a party appointment when the opportunity to go to America with Professor Wilson, the great women's specialist, had come along. But there was something unnerving in thinking that Dale was coming to stay here in this house to work on her book; Dale, who had once possessed so much of Geoff's mind and heart.

Sensing something wrong, Geoff came and slipped his arm about her.

"What is it, darling? Don't you want Dale here? I know it'll make extra work. I'm sure if we explained she'd understand and go to an hotel."

She would have loved to agree, but it was something that for pride's sake she couldn't do.

So she smiled, and said: "Nonsense! Of course she must stay. She hasn't been in England for so long, and she won't feel she's home in an hotel."

"Just as you like," he kissed the dimple at the corner of her mouth. "D'y'you feel like coming up to town to meet her?"

"Of course, I'd love the run. What time have we to be there?"

"About two. I'll have to hurry back from the round. We can go immediately after lunch."

"All right, I'll have it early," she put up her face for his kiss. "Good-bye, darling."

"Good-bye."

The platform was crowded when

Geoff and Leila arrived at Waterloo to meet Dale's train.

Leila stood beside Geoff, her arm in his, half-watching his face as he surveyed the cosmopolitan crowd about him.

He smiled down into her eyes and pressed her arm against his side, and it seemed to Leila at that moment that no outside influence could ever spoil the beauty of what she and Geoff held together. Then the boat train steamed slowly in and they waited expectantly to greet Dale Rodney.

With a little shock of surprise Leila saw her. It seemed incredible that even six long years could change a person so.

Dale had been Leila's own age, twenty-two, when she had gone away, brusque, untidy, with a sort of careless coltish beauty; so absorbed in her vocation that she could scarcely be bothered to observe the ordinary courtesies of life. Now she was carved and smoothed into that elegant, smooth perfection that only the successful New Yorker can achieve.

Against her will Leila glanced at Geoff, hating to be curious about his first impression but unable to control that swift, searching glance. Geoff, too, was looking at Dale with amazement and admiration, and unreasonably the same shameful, annoying little stab of fear came back to Leila.

Anxiety clutched at her heart as she followed Geoff forward, hand outstretched and lips smiling, to greet Dale. One had to keep up this smiling untruffled front in loyalty to Geoff and fairness to Dale.

An impatient smile curved Dale's lips. Her eyes sought Geoff's above this flowing spate of greetings; sought eagerly for the old swift response, and found, with a little shock of unhappiness, that it was no longer there.

Please turn to Page 12

WINGS NORTH

by

Robert
Ormond
CASE

AS Court Stewart descended the ice-sheathed steps and so swung lightly to the platform, he saw with satisfaction that the ornate concrete and granite station, like the snow-bound streets of the wilderness metropolis beyond, was practically deserted.

He knew that it was impossible to merge unnoticed into the winter scheme of gossip-hungry Atherton; in this boom-town, outfitting point and "farewell junction" through which raw gold and its attendant commerce flowed incessantly during the brief summer season. The fevers born of great, recent strikes and rumors of yet mightier El Dorados hidden in the formidable north were merely dormant, ready to be roused again at a moment's notice.

The fewer people who noted his arrival, therefore, the less would be the speculation concerning it; and there were, at the moment, only three men fully in the open, leaning against the bitter, sub-zero wind; a railroad attache with dispatcher's orders fluttering in his mittened hand, a shivering mail clerk and the driver of the hotel omnibus.

A fourth man was there, though Court was not aware of it until a moment later; he stood in the niche that guarded the main doors of the waiting-room, a point of vantage that not only sheltered him from the wind, but also enabled him, unobserved, to study the descending passengers. The upturned collar of his service greatcoat all but obscured his face; the device on his sleeve was that of lieutenant, Atherton division, of the Provincial Police.

Court spoke to the train-man stationed at the steps in passing, his teeth flashing in a slow grin that lighted up his good-natured, somewhat pugnacious, features, and nodded to the driver of the hotel omnibus, indicating his luggage. It was durable, all-leather luggage, battle-scarred, but obviously of good pedigree; like Court himself, who was dressed for the wilds in knee-length paca, heavy woollen breeches and fleece-lined coat designed to withstand both cold and damp, it had a robust, seasoned, quietly confident air.

The bus driver seized upon it with eager respect, racking it on the deck of an adjacent hand-truck: Gladstones, duffel bags, gun-cases and smaller, strap-suspended receptacles housing camera and field-glasses.

Court did not turn his back to the biting wind, but fronted directly into it for a moment, hands thrust deep in his side pockets, his feet firmly planted.

He raised his face, his chest swelling as he sampled the chill message pouring down from the iron peaks to the north-east; he tilted his head still farther back to scan the flawless, steel-blue infinity that joined horizon to tumultuous, gleaming horizon. An unconscious reflex, this, significant to discerning eyes.

Mountains and snow-choked gorges were impassable barriers only to those who crawled and crept via man-killing snowshoes and laborious dog sleds; a flier looked first at the sky.

He turned on his heel, unsmiling, but with a holding-in of exultant forces; it was like that of a small boy, circus-bound, who, at long last, hears the rollicking notes of the callopie and sees the far-off, beckoning dome of the big tent. The train



Court was back with his companions in those inhospitable wilds, savoring again all the thrill and all the fatigue of the expedition.

was under way; he waved to a blurred face beyond the frost-spangled window of the club car and made a mystic signal of farewell to the train-man on the steps.

The baggage hand-truck having already lumbered from view and the platform being apparently empty, his restraint crumbled; he executed a brief, exuberant jig step, clicking his

heels together and stamping his feet.

Then, with a half-sheepish glance about him, he thrust his hands deep in his pockets and crossed towards the waiting-room with long, buoyant strides.

"Get hold of yourself, Stewart," he told himself, resuming the mask that had only momentarily been laid

aside. "It's a big game, m'lud. Big stakes. Take nothing for granted."

When the officer stepped from his niche to bar the way, his tones were coldly courteous, his manner official. "Beg pardon, sir. Mr. Courtenay Stewart?"

"That's right." Court's glance flicked briefly to the device on the sleeve of the greatcoat and back

*Commencing...our
exciting new serial
story of a fight for
lost gold in pitiless
snowbound lands*

to his questioner's spare, expressionless face. "Provincial Police, eh? Lieutenant—"

"McBain."

Court knew better than to attempt to brush aside the impending red tape; it was best to welcome inspection, in fact, so that curious persons should learn all that it was necessary to know through official channels.

"I was checked through at Vancouver, but I suppose you'll want to see my papers. Inside?"

"Better step over to my office in the next block. I hope you don't mind legging it, instead of taking the hotel bus?"

"It's all right. I'll tell the driver."

They went into the waiting-room, where Court attended to this detail. He also stopped at the window to inquire about telegrams. The dispatcher thumbed through a file and nodded; a wire had come through yesterday from Edmonton. It had been delivered to the hotel, where Mr. Courtenay Stewart could claim it upon proper identification.

This was disturbing; Court pondered it as he followed McBain along the alley cleared by snow-ploughs through the shoulder-high drifts. The wire from Edmonton was undoubtedly from Arctic Airways. A wire at Vancouver a week before had confirmed the charter of the ship and all attendant details. The CA-17 was supposed to have been flown over the Rockies, via the

Jasper route, three days since. His first thought was apprehensive. Had the pilot succeeded in cracking up on that relatively easy stretch?

The building, housing administration offices and barracks of the fifteen troopers who patrolled, with the assistance of a like number of Royal Canadian Mounted Police, some quarter-million square miles of territory was severe in aspect and appointments. McBain led the way through an outer office, where a uniformed man on duty saluted smartly.

There was also a civilian, leaning in languid pose against the end of a long counter, his open bearskin coat revealing his slender, booted figure. His features were partially hidden by a close-fitting fur cap with ear pads lowered, but such portions as were visible were strikingly handsome after a hard, somewhat dissipated fashion; finely chiselled, hollow-eyed, the tiny waxed moustache imparting a dandified air belied by the cynicism of his lips and the contour of his lean, truculent jaw.

Court recognised the type: A remittance man—one banished to the outer frontier of the Empire through transgression of one of the codes the centuries had reared about Britain's ruling class. Some of these unfortunates, often scions of titled and landed families, were utterly worthless, crushed under the weight of their own disgrace. A few were goaded to the opposite extreme; these high-spirited wastrels presented a type formidable even in lawless outposts; the individual who knows in his heart that the ruins of all scruples are behind him.

This one was of the latter species, Court surmised. It was a type that had always both attracted and repelled him, steeped as he himself was in the traditions of the Empire. One heritage invariably remained to them. An impenetrable poise, an aloofness rooted in the memory of caste and class. It was evidenced here; the man inclined his head in response to McBain's curt nod, but seemed oblivious of Court's presence. Yet Court had a feeling that he had been subjected to a scrutiny even more shrewd and inclusive than his own.

McBain seated himself at his desk in his private sanctum. It was

Illustrated
by
VIRGIL



remote from the front office, flanking a window that looked out upon a deserted, snowbound street. He indicated a stiff leather-backed chair opposite, but Court remained standing; he drew out his wallet, extracted his papers and slid them across the desk.

The lieutenant examined them in a leisurely fashion that implied a polite rebuke, comparing them with a sheaf on his desk. At length he nodded.

"They appear to be in order. You've renewed your miner's licence, I see." He leaned back, his bony finger-tips drumming silently on the desk. "A few questions for our information here, if you don't mind. Routine merely, but essential."

"Go ahead," Court invited, replacing papers and wallet in an inner pocket.

"Your father, Courtenay Stewart, sen., a British citizen, left England at an early age and spent the balance of his life in the mining regions of Alaska, the Yukon Territory and Northern British Columbia. He died at Atlin ten years ago. He was a prospector of considerable experience, known in these regions as Swiftwater Stewart?"

"That's right. Though I can't understand, lieutenant—"

"You'll understand in a moment, sir. Be patient, please. Your status here must be clarified in detail."

"All right," Court recognised the hint of cold officiousness in the other's manner. To rebel against it was foolish. "Proceed."

"As a lad, you accompanied your father on at least two summer expeditions into the Cassiar and Cariboo districts?"

"That's right."

"During which, I take it, you acquired considerable information on trail work, hunting, camp-making, prospecting and the like. You also gained a sketchy knowledge of the region—I mean, its topographical features and mineral possibilities."

But for Ravenhill's warning, Court knew that he could not have passed off the encounter with Dolly Canby so easily . . . but now he could adopt a casual front as she heated him: "Well, Court!"

Court nodded. "It was my father's life. He let me go with him twice. As a kid will, I ate it up."

"And last summer," said McBain, glancing at his file, "you studied the terrain again, from the air. I happened to be stationed at Quesnel, so that I did not, personally, meet the members of the International Geographic Expedition when they came through. The complete record, of course, is before me. You were the expedition's pilot. The other members of the party included a Mr. Standish, a geologist, Cobb, a photographer and a local man, one Henry—Skinner—McGinn, who served the expedition in the capacity of cook, guide and handy man. Right?"

"Right," said Court, carelessly. And for the moment, in a quick flash of mind, he was back with his companions in those inhospitable wilds, savoring again all the thrill and all the fatigue of each expedition.

Then quickly recalling himself, he asked:

But he didn't meet me at the station."

"Perhaps because he wished to avoid attracting attention?"

Court shrugged. "Perhaps." He was, belatedly, on guard; there was more here than met the eye. "And you can take it for granted, lieutenant, that I've nothing to hide except my personal and private business. This might interest an individual; it can't possibly concern the Provincial Police."

But McBain was unruffled. "You'll permit us to judge that, if you don't mind. If your personal affairs lead you to embark on a highly dangerous enterprise, we must know your qualifications and, perhaps, your motives. First, your flying experience. The fact that you hold a transport licence in the States didn't qualify you entirely for the expedition last summer, I take it. You've also had some training along geological lines?"

"As an amateur, yes."

"You also had an interest—a 'personal and private' interest—in the

you greatly—no matter how 'personal' your business may be."

"I'm asking neither help nor hindrance," said Court, his blood rising. "Has it occurred to you, lieutenant, that I can claim citizenship here, under British law? If I'm forced to, that is, for strategic purposes?"

"There's no question of citizenship involved. It's immaterial."

"Very well then. My papers are in order. I've already been checked through by your superiors in Vancouver. If you insist on this examination, let's do it under oath, with my attorney and a stenographer present. Then, if you get out of your depth, it'll be a matter of record. Fair enough?"

McBain looked at him through narrowed, inscrutable eyes. His fingers drummed silently on the desk.

"Don't adopt an arbitrary attitude, Mr. Stewart. No emergency exists. These inquiries look to your own welfare. In the circumstances—as you know them—can any purpose be served by antagonising the Provincial Police?"

His tone was more conciliatory. Whether or not this arose from the fact that a bluff had been called, Court could not determine. In any event, he decided to meet the gesture half way. No use getting off on the wrong foot right at the start.

"All right. Go ahead. Maybe I can answer you at that, and no harm done."

"Good. Here is my first specific question: Is it true, or not, that your father, Swiftwater Stewart, during the summer before he died, discovered a tremendous placer deposit somewhere east of Atlin—a strike that might have rivalled that of the Klondike?"

Court did not immediately reply. He drew out a leather case and ex-

tracted a cigarette, lighted it, and blew a thoughtful cloud of smoke upwards. He could feel his pulses quickening. On the instant the complexion of the interview had changed; it was not now a question of how much he could withhold from this still-faced official—who was a poker player of calibre, plainly enough—but of finding out how much McBain himself knew.

"I can't answer that, of my own knowledge. I've heard rumors. My father died, you know, before he had recovered his faculties. He'd had a terrible experience. Someone had apparently left him for dead, somewhere out in the wilds, west of the Liard. He made it through to Atlin, but not in time to tell what he knew."

McBain nodded. "That's the official version. Have you also heard rumors to the effect that your father had a large amount of gold on his sled when he arrived at Atlin, but that official investigation failed to disclose any trace of it? Or the even more sinister theory that he might have recovered from his experiences except that some unknown person—presumably the one who assaulted him in the wilds—saw to it that he did not recover?"

"I've heard that, too."

"Do you entertain a theory as to who this unknown person was?"

"That wouldn't be reasonable, lieutenant. I was sixteen years old at the time. At a boys' school, some two thousand miles south in the States. Naturally, I'd like to know."

"We'll assume that you do have a theory concerning one of the few crimes of violence that the Mounties have failed to solve in the Territory. That's your privilege, of course. My next question: Is it true, or not true, that Henry—Skinner—McGinn, while camp cook on the expedition last summer, stumbled upon a placer deposit that you have reason to believe is the lost Swiftwater Stewart strike?"

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An adventurer undaunted

"And, by the way, where is Skinner? Is he around town? I've been looking forward to seeing the old cutthroat."

"We'll come to McGinn in a moment. And you may take it for granted, Mr. Stewart, that our file is fairly complete. Since you wired McGinn at Hazelton to meet you here, and he responded that he would meet you without fail, you must surely have some notion as to his whereabouts?"

"That's just the point," Court agreed, readily. "Yes, I wired him.

terrain to be covered by the expedition?"

Court looked hard at him, outwardly stolid, but with inner and mounting concern. "These are not routine questions, lieutenant. Will you state bluntly what you're driving at?"

"Delighted. Will you answer as frankly?"

"I won't promise that."

"No?" McBain's hard features congealed a little. "Come, come, Mr. Stewart. You know your way about in the province. You must surely know that we can help or hinder

Shipboard life was like a theatre to him... and he knew that when the anchor fell at the end of this voyage, it would be like the final curtain rung down on a great emotional climax

THE LAST CARD

IN my time I've heard a lot of patronising nonsense talked about ships' surgeons. People often ask me sympathetically how on earth I happened to "drift"—that's the word they use—into such an odd job, neither fish, flesh, fowl, nor red herring; a sort of strayed landsman whose main function is to keep out of the way of real officers, to make himself pleasant to passengers, to dance with neglected spinsters.

The last thing you expect of us is that we should be brilliant professionally. Well, that's fairly reasonable. Medical genius, after all, is not to be hired for a pound a day; and, as a result, you find us exactly what you might expect: retired general practitioners setting out to see the world "on the cheap"; boys, recently qualified, taking a last fling at adventure before settling down, and, even more often than these, crusty, middle-aged bachelors like myself, reasonably competent doctors, neither blessed nor cursed with ambitions.

I took to the sea because I'm interested in human nature. That, though few laymen realise it, is the most fascinating part of a doctor's life, and a ship's surgeon has a better chance of studying it than most. You see, every ship at sea is a forcing-house. In the arid catalogue of names on its passenger list it contains the seeds of an astonishing number of human passions. Some, of course, lie dormant and never germinate. Some, encouraged by tropical languors and Mediterranean moonlight, assume a startling vitality. Things happen more quickly at sea than on land. In the space of a two months' voyage, or even less, I've seen every conceivable variety of human drama develop, from light sentimental comedy and rollicking farce to the most moving of tragedies, the most thrilling of melodramas.

There's something in its setting that makes a ship like a theatre. At least, that's how I often feel it, sitting here on the boat deck alone, and watching the show. Sometimes I'm no more than an amused or horrified spectator. Sometimes fate enlists my services as a producer. Sometimes the anchor goes thundering down like a final curtain before the last scene has been played. Then, of course, I write the missing pages myself.

SOMETHING of that kind happened, in point of fact, in the tragedy-comedy in three acts which I call "The Last Card"; though, in this case, it was neither the first nor last but the middle act which was missing. It began on this very ship—the s.s. Nakuru, of the Anglo-African Steam Navigation Company. It took place some years after the war, and I shall change the names of the principal characters because, if I didn't, you'd almost certainly know them.

It began on the very day we left Tilbury in fog, outward bound for Belra and Durban via the Suez Canal, and ended on the voyage homeward, two months later. This violates, as you observe, the "unlucky" of time. But that makes no matter: at sea time ceases to have any importance.

Very well... On the evening we sailed the purser came to my cabin and showed me his passenger list. He pointed to a name—Lady Evelyn Powys—and said, "What do you think of that?" As a matter of fact this particular name meant nothing to me, and I told him so. "Who the devil is she?" I asked. He laughed. "You surly old devil! Haven't you seen her name and her

face a hundred times in the illustrated papers?"

"I don't read the things," I told him. "Who is she, anyway?"

"Elder daughter of the Marquess of Clun. Famed Society Beauty."

"In that case you can keep her. I know what Society Beauties look like, close to. What's all the excitement?"

"You remember Lance Strickland?"

"Of course I remember Lance Strickland. That romantic bouncer."

"Well, this girl was engaged to him. 'Romantic' is just the right word. It was the newspaper 'romance' of last year. You know that."

"But Lance Strickland, thank heaven, is dead. He was killed by an elephant somewhere in Portuguese East."

"Exactly. And Lady Evelyn is going to Panda."

"What's the use of her going to Panda if Lance Strickland's dead?"

"It's quite obvious. She's going out there to collect his remains. It's a touching example of devotion in a woman of a type which is popularly supposed to be heartless. The Press will love it. Peer's Daughter's Lone Pilgrimage. Can't you see the headlines?"

"I could, but I shan't, thank goodness! No papers till Durban."

"That's only the gilt on the gingerbread."

"What is the gingerbread?"

"Before he was killed, Lance Strickland discovered a goldfield—at least, so I've heard. The elephants were a sideline. That was what made the tragedy more romantic than ever. Before he sailed south he made his will and left Lady Evelyn everything."

"If Lance Strickland discovered a goldfield it's probably worth two-pence-halfpenny. You'd better tell Lady Evelyn that before she lands, or she's in for a shock. Have you seen her yet?"

"You bet. She wants me to change her cabin."

"They always do. Minimum rates for a suite de luxe. What is she like?"

"In her case, for once, the camera hasn't lied. She's a positive stunner."

"So, of course, you gave her the suite de luxe? Poor fool! Even at your age you really ought to know better than that."

"When she spoke of Strickland the tears came into her eyes. She was obviously in love with him. You'd have done the same if you'd seen her."

"If I see her at all it would probably be when she's sea-sick. Mal-de-mer doesn't improve that particular type of beauty. That's one consolation."

"I assure you, she wasn't made-up in the least. The poor girl was as white as a sheet."

"Of course she was. That's part of the game. Don't I know them! You wait till the Bay of Biscay gets hold of her. She'll be even whiter!"

That evening I thought quite a lot about the man whom I have called Lance Strickland. As a matter of fact, I had known and disliked the fellow for years; I had read all about his engagement to Lady Evelyn and felt sorry for her. Lance Strickland was a man of a type which is mercifully growing rarer: the false romantic, with nothing in the world to recommend him but an astonishing physical handsomeness, and an unusual share of that flamboyant courage which sometimes goes with stupidity.

Of his courage there was no doubt. He had shown it in half-a-dozen wars as a soldier of fortune; in his



Strickland was powerless to escape from the onrush of the infuriated beast.

passion for African adventure. He was the kind of man who spends his whole life dodging into the limelight. All through his life his name counted as "news"; and even the manner of his death—standing up to a charging elephant—was as spectacular as the engagement to this much-paraphrased and photographed lady, the penultimate achievement of his lifelong pursuit of publicity.

As a matter of fact, Lance Strickland's successes with women were among the least savory episodes of his adventurous life. I had seen something of them myself.

How a woman of Lady Evelyn's presumably refined upbringing could have fallen a victim to such spurious and superficial attractions as his was beyond my imagination. "Birds of a feather," I thought, and left it at that.

Yet when, later, the waves of Biscay having spent their fury, Lady Evelyn emerged from her retirement and appeared on deck, I must confess that I felt some sympathy with the purser's deplorable weakness. The cameras, indeed, had not lied. She was an astonishingly beautiful woman. Whatever else she might be (and I still had my reservations) she was a thoroughbred through and through. And, undoubtedly, unless she were a consummate actress—overwhelmed by a loss which (to me, at least) appeared less than tragic.

All day she sat on deck in a chair by herself—she had made it quite clear that her grief made ordinary

sociabilities unwelcome. She sat there and read or, more often, gazed at the sea. At sunset she retired to her cabin and was seen no more.

Her existence, in fact, was so deliberately "apart" that it seemed unlikely that I would make her acquaintance—and by now I wanted to make it—before we reached Panda, her port of disembarkation; so that I admit I felt some small triumph when, just as we were nearing Mombasa, the stewardess brought me a note which summoned me to her cabin.

THE ailment on which she consulted me was trivial: one of those casual inexplicable "temperatures" which sometimes appear in the tropics. When I had reassured her and prescribed for her, she seemed loath to let me go. We discovered a number of friends in common; and then talk became easy. Finally, she asked me if I had ever known Lance Strickland. I told her I had.

I shall never forget that hour. In some ways it was one of the most difficult I have ever experienced. You see, I did know Lance Strickland far better than she did, and, at the same time, I realised that I had never encountered a woman more utterly in love with a totally imaginary figure of her own creation. She was hungry for every addition to the cherished image that my memory could supply, and clutched at each detail I gave

her (against my conscience) with a pathetic eagerness which made her almost intolerably lovely.

No doubt I was assisting at an orgy of sentimentality, a state of mind which I abhor. So be it. For once in my life my prejudice weakened. I confess myself a victim. What is far more significant, I confess that I began to question my own judgment (and most other people's) of Strickland. Was he something more, I asked myself, than the courageous cad that we knew? Had this woman discovered or created in him some streak of latent nobility which made him a different person from that handsome, shoddy Don Juan?

By the end of that hour I was almost ready to sympathise in the mystical piety which was taking her over four thousand miles of sea and into the heart of Africa to visit his grave.

That, of course, was her mission. She could never have rested, she said, until she saw the spot where the body of her hero was laid: a place some two hundred miles inland from Panda. She had made all arrangements in advance with the companion of his adventures, the friend who had been with him when he died. Perhaps I knew him too? His name was Jack Barclay. I admitted that I knew Mr. Barclay by reputation, neglecting to say that the said reputation was vile, the length of the East African coast.

When she heard that I knew Barclay too, if only by hearsay, Lady Evelyn became rapturous. He had written her long letters, the most beautiful letters it had ever been her privilege to read—so simple, so direct, so shining with admiration and devotion for his dead friend, and, at the same time, so full of delicacy.

Barclay was travelling down to meet her at Panda, and had already arranged the safari to take her to Strickland's grave.

FIVE days later we dropped anchor at Panda. Lady Evelyn was our only passenger. Indeed, I imagine she must have pulled some strings to make the ship call there to land her and pick her up, a month later, on the homeward voyage.

Jack Barclay came off in a native craft with four rowers to take her ashore. I had never seen him before; but his looks, to my mind, reflected his reputation. He was a tall, well-made fellow, and had smartened himself up for the occasion with impeccable white ducks and a clean shave that, somehow, accentuated the hardness of his cast-iron features and his steely-grey eyes.

He was a type of Englishman that I've seen all over the seven seas, but rarely at home; the type that is always ready to "put you in the way of" a fortune with a knack of fading out as soon as a deposit is paid; the type that knows how to get things done "on the quiet"; the type that is never drunk, but always drinking; the type that is always nearly, yet never quite, a gentleman; the type that says he has been to a first-rate school, and probably has, but shuts up like a clam if you happen to have friends among his contemporaries. Don't I know them! I tell you, it gave me a positive shiver when I saw that pathetic and lovely creature go over the side with him. After all, they had arranged to meet there; she was a woman of the world. After all, as the purser said, it wasn't our business.

At this point our anchor came rumbling up; the act-drop descended. We steamed out of Panda, east by south-east, and left them. What happened, exactly, at Mombasa, I cannot tell. To condense my imaginations, it must have been something like this:—

Very well. They left Panda and moved, on safari, up country. Our friend Barclay was far too shrewd an old soldier to bungle his tactics. No doubt he showed a touching respect for her grief, further evidence of the "sensitivity" she had already found in his letters. No doubt he was always the gentleman;

COMPLETE
SHORT STORY

by

Francis
Brett
Young

considerate, good-humored, respectful. No doubt he was ready to talk about Strickland and prove what good friends they had been at any hour of the day or night, and so far removed from any material interest that he never even mentioned his dead friend's goldfield or the mining concession he had secured just before his death.

Do not forget that the woman had already fallen once for a man of this type—a more elegantly-bound edition of the same flamboyant sort of romance. If you do forget this, you may be perfectly certain that Barclay did not. The man was a canny gambler; she had allowed him to see her hand, and he played his cards skillfully.

So they came to M'Vumba. That, of course, was to be the culmination of Lady Evelyn's emotional experience. Here stood the grass-thatched hut in which Strickland had died; the very bed he had lain on. For her the place was full of devastating reminders of his personality, a veritable reliquary in which Barclay, with impressive piety, had collected and arranged his pathetic belongings.

It was beautiful, she thought, to think how this strong, unemotional man must have loved him; how he valued and revered even the least of his friend's possessions and had kept them intact, inviolate, for her eyes alone. There were love letters to Strickland—including the last, unopened—wrapped up in an old tobacco pouch. Extraordinarily touching.

Of all Strickland's relics, indeed, there was only one packet he did not show her. For excellent reasons. That was Barclay's last card.

In the meantime it is easy to imagine the cumulative effect of all these inanimate reminders of the man she had loved and lost on a mind already tautened to such a high pitch of emotion, so excited, so fatigued. Evelyn Powys had never set foot in Africa before; and here she found herself, alone with her sorrowful exaltation, in the heart of its brooding strangeness. Not quite alone . . . Though he was far too clever to intrude himself on her privacy, Jack Barclay was always there in the background, resourceful, watchful, tactful, solicitous, protective; the one living soul who was able to understand her grief and to share it.

IN spite of his zealous self-effacement, she was always aware of him; because of it (and also because he himself was one of the Strickland relics) she clung to him, trusted him. And he knew it. The game was proceeding according to plan.

Let us not be unfair. I cannot suggest that Jack Barclay's attitude towards her was completely cold-blooded. If he happened to be a "hard case," he was also a normal man. I find it difficult to believe that he wouldn't have fallen in love with her, quite apart from the fact that she had inherited Strickland's new goldfield and concession. I will only say that this fact made him much more circumspect in his attentions. There was something bigger than the possession of a beautiful woman at stake.

It is difficult, too, to believe that Evelyn Powys was not kindly disposed towards him. When two people of opposite sexes spend a whole month together in the isolation

of the African bush, human nature is bound to have some say in the matter. Add to this the undeniable scientific fact that extremes of emotion—grief, fear, love, hatred—are interchangeable, and that the passion that overflows one channel of expression frequently forces its way, with devastating effects, into another.

I do not say that Lady Evelyn fell in love with Jack Barclay; only that her intense condition was such that she might have fallen in love (or in hate) with any man, and that Barclay was the only human being in reach of her when she stood at his side, overwhelmed with a tempest of emotion, before Strickland's grave. And the after-swell of that tempest must still have stirred her when they turned their backs on M'Vumba and trekked to the coast.

I was not, in fact, greatly surprised when the purser informed me that Jack Barclay had booked a homeward passage by wireless from Mozambique.

"Better warn your friends not to play poker with him," I said. Quite

Fascinating human drama

unnecessarily; for Jack Barclay was already engaged on another game. The third act begins.

From the moment they stepped on board at Panda I noticed the change in both of them. Jack Barclay was twice the man he had seemed when last I saw him. There was a new air of confidence and self-respect in his bearing. He had fully recovered the good manners which he had mislaid; if they weren't exactly charming, they were quite unexceptionable; and he never drank before sundown.

The change in Lady Evelyn was even more marked. Though she

Although there was a cold wind blowing, Lady Evelyn and Barclay refused to leave the boat-deck, and they seemed ready to brave the weather for several hours.

still wore her mourning black, her eyes were no longer tragic. Though she greeted her old acquaintances—the captain, the purser, and myself—with familiar friendliness, she soon made it quite clear that she had no intention of taking part in the ordinary social life of the voyage. She still thought of herself as the victim of a recent tragedy, entitled to be left alone.

Alone, that is, with Jack Barclay. He saw to that.

Each morning, when she emerged from her cabin, he was ready waiting to carry her cushions and books to the two chairs he had placed in her favorite station for'ard on the boat-deck.

There they sat together all day, idly talking in subdued voices or

"Why, tell the poor child what a blighter the fellow is!"

"And be told in return to mind our own business. No thank you! Haven't you learned at your age that a wise man keeps his hands clear of dog-fights and love affairs?"

"But it's monstrous! Unless someone does something that scoundrel will get her."

"It's no good being jealous," I told him. "You're out of the running, anyway; and unless Barclay gets a move on he'll be out of it, too. When the north wind blows cold west of Suez all things look different."

"That's another four days."

On the morning of the third, when we sighted the pink hills of Sinai, a sinister symptom met our eyes. Lady Evelyn appeared on deck in a white linen frock with no sign of mourning, but a black velvet ribbon round her panama hat. The purser observed it hopelessly.

"We're for it!" he said.

It certainly looked like it. As they descended from the boat-deck for luncheon I also observed that the lady was leaning on Barclay's arm. Yet I wondered.

You see, in a case of this kind, the element of time is important, and it seemed to me that time must necessarily fight against Barclay; for, impulsive as she was, Lady Evelyn was also, as I read her, a woman of some natural taste—and Barclay, after all, was poor stuff compared even with Strickland. Surely by now she must have come

to the bottom of him? Did Barclay, too, realise that time was fighting against him? Those hard eyes, it seemed to me, were beginning to show traces of anxiety.

"It's all over except for the shouting," the purser said, gloomily. "I bet you a fiver he proposes to-night and that she accepts him."

"Well, I take you," I said. "I'm all for a sporting chance."

"And I hope to heaven you win!" said the purser, savagely.

That night there was a cold wind blowing off the Libyan desert. Most of the passengers were shivering already; the dance-floor was nearly empty. For all that our couple refused to desert the boat-deck. We watched them go up the ladder. Lady Evelyn was wearing a fur cape and Barclay carried her rugs.

The purser groaned. "What did I tell you?"

They were still on deck when I went below.

At midnight I heard a tap at my cabin door. It was the stewardess.

"You're wanted in Suite 'C,' sir," she said. "Lady Evelyn Powys. Her ladyship told me to tell you to come at once."

In Suite "C" I found Lady Evelyn. Her eyes were the eyes of an angry tigress. Her lip trembled as she spoke, but her voice was low and anything but hysterical.

"I sent for you, doctor," she said, "because I feel that I simply must speak to somebody, and you're my oldest friend on this ship. You'll forgive me, won't you?"

"Of course. I'm entirely at your service. What is the matter?"

"It's that man . . ."

"You mean Barclay?"

Please turn to Page 12



FRIENDLINESS.

amusement and admiration were there—a look he might give to any charming woman—but nothing for her alone.

She turned to hear Leila's warm lovely voice saying: "How are you? Welcome home! We've been reading such marvellous things about you..." and smiled mechanically in reply.

Of course, she might have known. This was exactly the sort of girl Geoff would ultimately love; English, serenely capable, with that curved tender mouth, so wise with laughter. The girl he had married while she had been away.

Geoff was greeting her with admiration but not with emotion, the old flame dead in his eyes, his arm linked through this lovely girl's.

"Oh, Dr. Rodney," teased Geoff with mock humility, "We're honored! We're delighted that you should choose to write your distinguished work in our humble abode. But we'll have to rush back if you don't mind, because I've surgery at seven and four patients to see in between."

"Oh, Geoff," Dale protested, smiling.

"Just ignore him," said Leila smilingly. "Send him to look for your luggage, man's mental place on a railway station. You must be longing for rest, and tea. Even the briefest railway journey has that effect on me."

She took her hand out of Geoff's arm. "Work, slave, and see to the luggage. We'll go and sit in the car. Are you terribly hungry? We planned a nice restful stay for you, but I'm afraid people are going to insist on calling. My father is looking forward to meeting you."

Valiant

By a mutual feminine instinct to find out more about each other, they sat together in the back seat of the car, pulling the warm fur-lined rug over their knees. Dale seemed a little surprised.

"I'm longing to have a talk with Geoff," she said. "What is he doing now? Is he with your father—or is he working with the hospital research people as he planned?" Seeing Leila's rather puzzled expression she said with charming apology: "Oh, I forgot—you wouldn't know. Naturally he wouldn't bore you with dull medical details."

"I don't find them dull," said Leila slowly. "It's most interesting work."

"I'm glad Geoff is forging ahead on his own," said Dale in tones of unbelievable innocence. "Before I went I always felt he depended on me too much—that was one reason why I accepted the post with Wilson. The emotional tie between Geoff and me made it difficult for us to work together. But now, of course, he's gone forward on his own. I hope he will spare time to help me with my book."

"Geoff has dropped any idea of specialising. He does no laboratory work. He has a practice."

"A general practitioner!"

"Yes. He decided to buy the practice the year before we got married."

"Oh?" Dale's thin pencilled brows went up, and her voice was softer than ever. "I always thought that Geoff was going to specialise. That is what we planned for him to do." And then: "I dreamed of great things for him, and I came home relying on his help. Surely he isn't going to let me down?"

Continued from Page 7

"I think," Leila said lightly, "that it is a great thing to be a fine general practitioner."

Dale shrugged her shoulders. "Mumps, measles, tonsils—any moderately intelligent doctor can tackle these things. I expected great things from Geoff."

The light pressure of Leila's hand silenced her. Geoff was pushing his way towards the car, a porter wheeling Dale's luggage following him. Leila's fingers knotted tightly in her lap, knowing that she had given herself away. That quick silencing touch had told Dale that this forgotten career of Geoff's was not discussed between them. A little hint of triumph glowed momentarily in Dale's dark eyes.

When they arrived home tea was already on the tea-wagon before the fire.

Dale glanced round the room. "You are quite a Philistine now," she said softly. "I remember your two untidy rooms in Bloomsbury, and how poor we all were then. But you showed great promise in those days, Geoff."

Leila poured the tea with a steady hand. This was the chink in the armor of their happiness; their one vulnerable spot. Dale had discovered it so soon.

"I hope I'm doing good work now," he said evenly. "I'm very busy, and when I start on the new hospital work I'll be even busier."

"Oh, yes, I can see you're making money," Dale glanced round the charming room again. "Leila was telling me she had influenced you to buy a practice."

Geoff said defensively: "Leila and her father had nothing to do with it. I decided long before we married to take a practice." As Dale shrugged expressive shoulders, he added, with a touch of anger, "Why shouldn't I? It's very interesting work."

I

just seems strange—for you." Dale put her cup down, resting her chin on her hands, her eyes fixed reminiscently on the fire. "It's a pity. I always had such belief in you..." she left the sentence skilfully unfinished. "What a pity," her silence seemed to say, "that Leila did not believe in you, too."

Geoff did not answer, so she picked up her things and went across to the door, turning back to speak to them: "I think, if you'll excuse me, I'll bath and change before dinner. I'm sorry you haven't any new thesis to show me, Geoff, but you've a charming home." She smiled her sudden, brilliant smile, and went out.

Leila put her hands across the frightened beating of her heart. The challenge had been so deliberate, a glove tossed down into the arena of her happiness.

She looked up at Geoff, irritably lighting a cigarette, and tried to think of the right thing to say. She went across and slipped her arms gently around him.

"Don't let her get under your skin, darling," she said lightly.

"What do you mean?"

She saw her mistake at once. To blame Dale would be to imply antagonism, and she knew nothing would irk Geoff so much.

"Oh, nothing," she made her voice adequately lazy and amused, "I think she's trying to pull your leg, that's all."

"A pretty way to do it," he said wryly. "To suggest I've lost my ambition, that I've sold my birthright for a mess of pottage."

She knew he was in the mood to thrash this thing out, to be honest with himself. "I've been thinking about this career business, sweet. I've been wanting a down-to-earth talk with you for some time."

"I beg your pardon!"

They looked up simultaneously, and for some unaccountable reason their arms fell away from one



THIS attractive little draped toque is of moss-green taffeta with velvet trim and nose-length veil. An Erik model.

another. Dale, dramatically attractive in her tailored crepe-de-chine dressing-gown, was standing at the door regarding them with an air of cool amusement. She laughed. "I didn't know you were still at that stage!"

Geoff reached out a long arm and defiantly pulled Leila to his side again.

"Did you want something?" asked Leila.

"Yes—the bathroom, please."

Leila was filled with remorse, and her instincts as a good hostess took her from Geoff's side. "I'm so sorry, I'll come and show you."

"Oh, by the way," Dale turned to Geoff again. "Did Leila tell you? I was counting on your helping me with my book..."

Geoff glanced swiftly at Leila. "No, she hasn't told me yet."

Dale said with quick apology: "I'm sorry. Perhaps I shouldn't have mentioned it without talking over it carefully with Leila. After all, it would take you away from her quite a bit, and—"

"Leila doesn't make decisions regarding my work," said Geoff stiffly. "What is it?"

"Just that Dale wants you to help her with the work she's come over to England to begin," said Leila.

Please turn to Page 14

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THE S-M-O-O-T-H-E-S-T EVER MADE

The Last Card

Continued from Page 11

"YES... I'm so angry, so utterly humiliated, I can scarcely tell you!"

"Suppose you lie down." "No, I can't lie down. I'm too furious. If I didn't tell someone I think I should go off my head."

"I think I can guess what's happened," I told her. "No, you couldn't. Nobody could. It's quite incredible..." The utter baseness!"

"He asked you to marry him?" "Yes. But that's nothing. I'm used to that sort of thing, and I half expected it."

"You refused him?" "Naturally. A man like that?" "I congratulate you."

"But that wasn't the end. Oh, it's such a mean story, doctor. You see..."

He was Lance's friend. As I told you before, he wrote to me after the accident—the most beautiful letters, so simple, so full of feeling. And I liked him, or thought I liked him. Because of Lance—and because, I suppose, I was dazed and couldn't see straight. I accepted him as a friend—Lance's friend—and he always behaved like one. I was terribly pleased to tell you the truth, when he said that he didn't like to think of my going back to England alone. I thought it was sweet of him. And I didn't really mind a great deal when he began to be more attentive. Of course, I was not in love—but I couldn't exactly blame him for falling in love with me, could I?"

"Indeed, no," I said. And I meant it—though not in her sense.

"So I tried to make it quite clear that—that it was no use. Without being unnecessarily cruel. And I thought—I suppose it was stupid of me—I thought he knew how I felt. He seemed to, anyway. Then tonight he begged me to go and sit with him in our usual place on the boat-deck. I told him it was too cold; but you know how obstinate men are and, after all, as he said, it was probably our last evening together. So we went up as usual."

"And then?" "Then, of course, he began all over again and much more violently. I tried hard to make him see sense, but nothing would stop him. He said I'd been playing with him, and whatever I said, he was going to marry me; and at last I told him I was sick of it and absolutely refused to hear any more. 'You still think you're in love with Lance Strickland?' he said. 'You poor

little fool, I'll soon cure you of that! Have a look at these, and you'll soon see what sort of a man Strickland was!'"

"These?"

"A packet of letters, doctor. He pushed them into my hands. 'I know the woman who wrote them,' he said. 'She's a settler's wife in Nairobi. The last is unopened—but if you'll look at the dates of the others and read what she says, you'll be able to gather what Strickland was writing to her while he was engaged to you. Now that I come to think of it,' he said, 'she was rather your type. And if that doesn't satisfy you,' he said, 'I can show you another: the letter that Strickland wrote to her the day before he was killed. Read them, read them!' he said. I can hear his voice at this moment..."

She shuddered and gasped. Her teeth chattered, like a man's with malaria. I put my hand on her shoulder, trying to steady her.

"And what did you do?"

"Oh—I hardly know what I did. If I'd had a knife in my hand I think I should have killed him. I don't know. I believe I threw the packet in his horrible face. I think I was mad for a moment. I felt sick. More disgust than hatred, you know. And then, somehow, I really don't know exactly, I found myself here in my cabin. I was on the floor, crying like a baby. Awful."

Now I've managed to tell you I feel better—a little better. It was good of you to come so quickly, doctor."

"Well, you've told me; and now it's all over," I said. "Go to sleep. Forget all about it."

"Forget... that?" "I shall send the stewardess with a sleeping-draught. Will you promise to take it?"

She nodded. "I'm sure I shan't sleep."

"I'm ready to bet that you will." "I wish I believed you, doctor."

"Now you're smiling. That's a good sign. Good-night."

I went straight to my cabin and mixed a draught which I gave to the stewardess. Then I knocked up the purser. The poor devil was asleep.

"Stir a leg there, young man!" I said. "You owe me a fiver. And get hold of the barman. We must split a bottle on this!"

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NIGHT
and DAY

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WHY WORRY?

If the brain force and energy which the average person normally expends in worrying were used for some form of creative or productive work, he would soon advance to outstanding success in life.

Worry does not help. It retards, for it tires the brain and shakes the nerve, and so makes the problem being faced the more difficult to master.

To worry over the future is complete waste of time.

To plan is one thing, but to worry is entirely another.

£1 for this letter to Mary Barker, Alice St., Maryborough, Qld.

GOOD OLD DAYS

THERE are many people who are constantly referring to "the good old days." But surely the old days were not so good.

Famines, epidemics, lack of medical aid and scarcity of means of communication are but a few of the discomforts our ancestors suffered.

Indeed, we have much to be thankful for, even if this is an age of noise and speed.

Miss E. Jose, 130 Rose Tee, Wayville West, S.A.

FLATTERY

JUST a word on flattery. How many modern girls like being told they are pretty when they know they are not?

Surely there are other ways of winning a girl without telling her she is getting more beautiful every day.

Of course, all girls like being flattered when there's truth in it. My husband would not tell me the dinner was nice if it wasn't. It would hurt me more if he said it was, because I would know he was just trying to be nice about it.

Mrs. C. Garness, Round Hill, Wivenhoe, Burnie, Tas.

GIRL CYCLISTS

WHILE on holidays recently in a country town I was surprised to note that nearly every girl possessed a bicycle.

There is nothing wrong in that, but I could not help noticing that many of them wobbled precariously all over the road to their own danger and that of other road users.

While admitting that cycling is a healthy pastime, I consider that most girl cyclists are a menace to traffic.

J. Smyth, c/o 8 Canterbury Tee, Clarence Park, S.A.

"WALLFLOWERS"

RECENTLY I attended a dance with a friend of mine. I was amazed to notice how many older women were playing "wallflower."

There appears to be little consideration for the "oldish" woman by our males these days. The older man is no exception either. More often than not, his choice is the flapper in preference perhaps to a good dancer.

Mrs. E. Buchanan, 19 Platform St., Lidcombe, N.S.W.

BASIC WAGE

WHY not train our young men to realise what "the basic wage" means?

Half our men to-day think they get a higher wage than women because of their superior work, yet the only difference—other than hard manual labor—is the award which the Government makes which gives a man enough to keep himself, wife and child.

The same award only allows a woman enough to keep herself, and until men realise they are given the basic wage to make a home with, women will continue to desert the kitchen for the office and demand equal rights and equal pay.

Mrs. L. Bartle, Kulara, via Cairns, Qld.

Must we have annual spring cleaning?

SPRING cleaning need not be an ordeal, Miss McCure (2/9/39). With a little careful organisation and planning, the members of the household need not be in any way upset.

Many housewives attack the job with a feverish haste, expecting to get everything done in a couple of days, whereas if they worked on the system of, say, turning out a room a day, there would be no need to make the house uncomfortable.

V. Jones, 76 Radnor St., Camberwell, Vic.

More leisure

WHY are some women forever on the race to get their housework done, and always grumbling about the time they have to spend on doing various things?

Surely with all the modern appliances they should have more leisure.

Mrs. Nuttall, 79 Shakespeare St., Mt. Hawthorn, W.A.

New methods

YOUR argument is sound, Miss McCure, but is there any annual spring cleaning these days? I think not.

In this age of electrical appliances, picture rails, curtains, etc., are done weekly, as a matter of course, thus eliminating that "mess up," as you call it.

Of course, in our grandmother's day, when houses were more cluttered, not only was it necessary—it was essential.

Mrs. H. Goodsir, Debonair, 34 Cornwall St., West Moreland N12, Vic.

Must be done

MOST housewives feel it is necessary to have that annual spring cleaning.

When we have fires going all winter and the windy, dusty weather during August to contend with, we would make ourselves slaves to housework to attempt to do the house thoroughly every day.

So we just have to have that big clean up in the spring.

If the work is done methodically



"Need not be ordeal."

the household need not be upset and the family should not grumble if they have to give a hand.

Mrs. J. R. Smith, 25 Stanley St., Randwick, N.S.W.

Men object

HERE is one who agrees that it is high time the old-fashioned method of spring cleaning was scrapped. There are a good many debarths who refuse to lighten their labors in spite of the modern appliances on the market, and who still persist in causing discomfort to the family.

Men in particular loathe these periodical upheavals. Cleaning as we go is a safe and wise way of doing the work in any home.

Mrs. A. Irving, 8 Llewellyn St., Merewether, Newcastle, N.S.W.

Gives pleasure

NO matter how clean the home is kept all the year round, Miss McCure, there is always a certain accumulation of odds and ends of no further use.

Spring cleaning gives the housewife a chance of discarding these, refurbishing her household furnishings, etc. When the work is done she has the satisfaction that all good housewives know after a strenuous cleaning from front door to back.

Mrs. M. Dexter, c/o Box 1362M, G.P.O., Melbourne C1.

Qualities that indicate a good education

MRS. A. C. BENNETT (2/9/39) raises an interesting question when she asks the main characteristics of a well-educated person.

Self-confidence is undoubtedly the first qualification, and self-confidence in turn gives poise, leadership, and the ability to be thoroughly at ease in any avenue of life. It also occasionally leads to false superiority, arrogance, and snobbery, but only when combined with less desirable qualities.

A good education so enriches life that it is one of the greatest blessings anyone could have.

Miss R. McGrath, Box 57, Brookton, W.A.

Learn from others

A GOOD education should bring out the best in us. It should develop us mentally, physically, and morally.

I consider the main characteristics of a well-educated person to be culture and refinement. These are usually lacking in those who

Formal proposal now thing of the past

IN these days of hardened cynics, is it possible that the old form of proposal still exists? As far as I can see, the modern girl just drifts into matrimony—with the boy hardly aware of how it all happened.

Admittedly, the girls occasionally go so far as to suggest the state of holy bliss, but all my casual young acquaintances think a proposal mid-Victorian, the sort of thing found only in musical comedy.

Miss Diane McDonald, c/o 23 Brighton St., Petersham, N.S.W.

openly brag of their training, and who are not willing to share opinions. We can always learn something from others no matter how well educated we may be.

C. W. Turner, Outlands, Tas.

Latent talents

IF people of good education are rude and dogmatic, Mrs. Bennett, it is in spite of, and not because of, their education.

Real education means the drawing out of all the latent powers of mind and body, the chief of these being a sympathetic understanding of other people and their problems.

Education makes one tolerant and helpful to others, and if these qualities are lacking the person has merely acquired information—not true education.

Mrs. D. Durmo, 11 Ashgrove Ave., Ashgrove, Brisbane.

Should jewellery be only of high quality?

YOU ask, Mrs. Munro (26/8/39), why people wear synthetic jewellery. Do you believe that only expensive trinkets give pleasure?

Most working girls receiving low wages like to brighten up their old frocks with some little piece of jewellery.

Often, if care is taken to choose



"All give pleasure."

brooches or clasps which harmonise, a dress is given a new lease of life.

Miss Joan Hogg, Terrigal, N.S.W.

Grow out of it

MOST girls in their teens, Mrs. Munro, have a craze for cheap, flashy jewellery, but they usually grow out of it.

As for the adult woman who loads herself with ornaments, she is, perhaps, unable to purchase real jewels and so must satisfy herself with garish imitations.

Mrs. A. Lind, Stafford St., Windsor N3, Brisbane.

Suits purse

THE reason, Mrs. Munro, so much cheap jewellery is worn to-day is because it is fashionable and also rather pretty.

It enables the person of limited means to have pretty jewellery accessories to match every frock at very little expense. Why not?

Ivy F. Vandin, Norman Tee., Enoggera, Qld.

Quality first

YES, Mrs. Munro, women who deck themselves with cheap jewellery certainly don't look smart. How much nicer they would look if, instead of buying so many pieces of synthetic jewellery, they bought one really good piece.

Mrs. L. R. Cleggett, Gover St., North Adelaide.

To match frocks

PROBABLY if women could afford good jewellery, they wouldn't wear the cheap articles. People in poor circumstances love pretty things but are forced to wear the imitation variety.

Besides, fashion changes even in jewellery. One can have something to match every frock. It makes a change.

Gale Nelson, Herbert St., Brisbane B17.

BACK TO LAND

THE scarcity of men on the land has been a serious problem for years. But what of the many women who are also forsaking country life?

These women do not realise that country life is now offering them more than it has ever done before. Australia needs the man on the land. The men need the women to make homes for them and help them. Here is a worthwhile job for women.

Miss N. C. Armstrong, 31 Come Crescent, Newstead, Launceston, Tas.

SPECTATORS

AUSTRALIANS are noted for their interest in sport.

Are we not rather lovers of entertainment? Compare the small number actively engaged in healthy games on Saturday afternoons with the thousands who attend to witness those games.

Why are so many content to take their sport by proxy?

June Hayter, c/o M. Mouet, 27 Chapel St., Windsor S3, Vic.

HOME SING-SONG

IT is amazing the number of mothers who will not allow their children to bring their pals home to entertain, in case they spoil the carpet or lounge suite.

What better entertainment can one enjoy than a group of young folk around the piano singing?

Mrs. T. H. Roberts, Warrigal, 55 Yelverton St., St. Peters, N.S.W.

PICTURE HATS

NOW that women have taken to the delightful crinoline frock, isn't it time we revived some of the charming bygone fashions in hats?

What could be more becoming than the graceful picture hat or the quaint little poke bonnet?

Personally, I would like to see the picture hat come into popularity for the spring. So becoming to most faces, it is quite in keeping with the present-day frocking.

E. Curl, 308 Station St., Chelsea, Vic.

DANCE ETIQUETTE

A CUSTOM that has unfortunately died out is for the gentleman to wear white gloves when dancing.

If a few young men would start wearing gloves I am sure it would not be long before more followed their good and thoughtful example.

And what about the ladies following suit with fans? To use a fan is more ladylike than to flip-flap handkerchiefs before their faces. Besides, fans can be delightfully fascinating feminine instruments of charm. Their use is an art in itself.

Kate Kennedy, Deewhy Rd., North Curl Curl, N.S.W.

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New **RINSO**
SUDS

are EXTRA RICH to get
clothes BRILLIANT Safely

The moment you pop your clothes into the copper, New Rinso's hard-working suds get busy! Masses of fine-bubble suds that loosen and remove even stubborn, worn-in dirt. So your clothes come out clean as clean... perfectly dazzling. Rinso alone gets this wonderful whiteness—without any help from extras.



COLOURS CLEARER, GAYER!
Through wash after wash with New Improved Rinso colours come up bright and unfaded, silks and woollens stay new-looking... lovely.

PERFECTLY SAFE FOR HANDS
No more sore, dry hands and split nails if you wash with the New Rinso! You'll find these extra-gentle suds as mild as if you did your whole big wash with complexion soap. And what is kind to sensitive skin is kind to clothes.

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FULL INSTRUCTIONS
ON THE BIG, NEW PACKET

A LEVER PRODUCE

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Valiant

Continued from Page 12

Geoff said slowly: "It's awfully nice of you, Dale, and awfully flattering, of course, but I'm a trifle rusty, and I've got little time."

"Nonsense. Your practical knowledge will be invaluable to me. And you needn't take that hospital work on just yet, need you?"

Lella sensed a sudden hope in Geoff, a sudden quickening interest.

"Well—I'd like to help. I'll give what time I can, Dale."

"We'll have to start right away, if Lella is sure she doesn't mind?"

"Of course," Lella smiled with a sudden poignant sweetness, "of course, why should I mind?"

"That's a good girl," said Geoff, his arm about her.

"To-morrow then?" said Dale.

Dale smiled at Lella; their eyes met, the girl lovely and valiant, the woman dark and inscrutable. In spite of the comforting heaviness of Geoff's arm about her shoulders, Lella knew that in a subtle way the first victory had gone to Dale.

Lella lay in a hammock slung between two silver birches at the end of the garden.

Geoff, shut up with Dale, working, talking, preoccupied and irritable if she went near them or reminded them of meal times, seemed to have no eyes or ears for anyone but Dale. He did not seem to care that the hospital work might be given to a new young doctor in Aylesford.

Then there was Dale's dominating presence which crept through the house pulling everything on to the keen intellectual plane that served her book, that served science and ambition; so that the whole charm of Lella's home, that home she had built with so much love, seemed dissolved into the routine of a hospital.

Dale would be returning to America soon, but by the time she went the baby would be here, and Lella wanted Geoff to herself for these two precious months.

Two more months before Dale went and there was just one little gleam of hope. Dale had to go away for some days to Edinburgh to consult a specialist on a certain part of her book. Only a few days, but Lella knew that in those days without her she could get near Geoff again, talk to him, make him understand that he was only chasing dreams.

She lay looking up through the fronds of the silver birch. Then she saw Dale standing by her side and an unreasonable nervousness seized her.

She washed her hands didn't tremble so. No one else had ever affected her like this. Thankfully she saw Geoff's tall figure come through the french windows towards them. Even if he wasn't aware of her need, she was glad to have him there.

In a moment, however, her anxiety had deepened.

He spoke shortly. "Have you told her?"

Lella said apprehensively. "Told me what?"

Geoff sat down in the hammock beside her, loosely clasping his hands. "Dale has to go up to Edinburgh to see Forsyth. She really can't leave it any longer. She'd like me to go with her."

SOMETHING in Lella rose in protest; she wanted to cry aloud: "No, no, no." She had been counting on these days when Dale was away to bring Geoff back to her, back to love and understanding. Now Dale had secured those precious days for herself.

"Do you mind terribly if I go, darling? We won't be away quite three days."

"If you must go, you must, I'll ring up Tessa Stanwyck; she'll come and stay with me." She spoke slowly.

Geoff put his arm round her and drew her to his side.

"You're a brick, darling, and I'll be back in no time."

"When will you be leaving?" she asked.

"We'd like to go right away," said Dale. "We could catch the Flying Scotsman to-night and be there to-morrow morning. We should see

Forsyth to-morrow afternoon and again on Thursday morning, and we'd be back on Friday."

Lella thought: "I wonder if Geoff will come back? I wonder if once she gets him away she'll ever let him come back to me?"

There seemed no time between hearing of the visit to Edinburgh and their departure.

Tessa Stanwyck had arrived just before the other two left. She was a school friend of Lella's, warm-hearted, beloved and alarmingly frank.

"Well," she said drily, "I admire your courage. I wouldn't care for any husband of mine to go driving up north with that young woman."

"They're not driving," said Lella dully. "They're leaving the car in town and going up by train."

"I still admire your courage," said Tessa.

To her surprise and distress, Lella burst into sudden helpless tears. She put her arms round her quickly.

"Silly! I'm only pulling your leg. Why shouldn't he go? What's the matter, darling? Tell me, please, Lella."

"She's in love with him," said Lella passionately. "She's in love with him. She came here to try to get him back. Oh, Tessa, I'm so afraid. I've been afraid all the time. It's been such—such agony!"

The pent-up fears of weeks came spilling out of the house of pride. It was some time before Tessa could calm her and get her to rest.

Geoff had promised to telephone the following day, and Lella found herself listening for the telephone bell. She realised with horror that her strung-up nerves had reached the end of their endurance.

"I DIDN'T know," she said to Tessa, "just how much Dale was getting me down."

They were sitting in the loggia, with the work basket between them. Lella's hands nervously idled in her lap, Tessa's busy with knitting.

"No?" said Tessa grimly. "I think she did. It seems to me that she has been applying a subtle, psychological 'third degree' ever since she came."

The telephone rang, and Lella rose quickly. She went through the lounge and across the hall, lifted the receiver.

A soft cultured voice with a dry Scottish accent answered her.

"Is that Dr. Mitchell's house? Mrs. Mitchell? Oh, this is Professor Forsyth. I've been dining with your father, Mrs. Mitchell, and he tells me your husband wishes to consult me on something? I'll be in London for three days..."

The color drained out of Lella's face. She said clearly: "I'm so sorry, my husband isn't at home. May I ask him to telephone you?"

She heard her voice, saw her hand take a pencil and make a note of a telephone number on the memorandum pad, heard herself saying good-bye.

Professor Forsyth was not in Edinburgh. They must have known—surely Dale would never have started on such a trip without being sure that Forsyth was there. They must have known; there was no reason for them to have gone to Scotland—unless... As Tessa, alarmed by the long silence, came into the hall, Lella crumpled up in a heap against the wall.

Geoff and Dale came from the grey stone arch of Holyrood House into the golden light of the late afternoon.

She slipped her arm through his and smiled up into his preoccupied face. "A penny for them?" she asked mischievously.

He stopped in his tracks, impatient, his blue eyes a trifle angry and bewildered.

"I can't understand you, Dale. You rush me up here to see Forsyth, and when we get here you absolutely refuse to work. We're not on a sight-seeing tour, you know!"

Please turn to Page 16

ALL characters in the serials and short stories which appear in The Australian Women's Weekly are fictitious, and have no reference to any living person.

Well over 40—
yet brimful of
PEP!



TAKE a tip from this happy woman. She's long past 40, but she hasn't let herself drift into the backwaters of life.

"I've been using Kruschen Salts for rheumatism," she writes. "I had it very bad in my feet and arms. Now I can walk miles, and no pain. Although I am long past 40, I am much better in health. People laughed when I told them I'd started taking Kruschen. But I have the laugh now. Kruschen has made a new woman of me. I feel bright and happy where I used to feel pain."—(Mrs.) R. R.

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• VINCENT FAIRFAX and his charming English bride at Australian Air League Ball—their first Sydney dance since arriving from London.



• DEBUTANTE LOIS BURTINSHAW and Bill Kelly, her partner at the Australian Air League Ball at the Trocadero.



• MRS. PETER MOORE and Belinda Street at a party to celebrate Belinda's approaching marriage to Don Mackay . . . it takes place on October 11 at St. Mark's.



• DOD FALKINER in Melbourne . . . photographed toasting the bride when Laure Falkiner married Major Bruce Steer.

Gottings of the Week

by Miss Midnight



Topsy-turvy plans . . .

IVIE PRICE tells me that Lady Gowrie's engagement book nowadays is like ours—simply topsy-turvy. All those farewell parties arranged in her honor are being cancelled like wildfire. Largest cancellation of the week was National Council of Women's "do" on Wednesday, and next day was to have been the farewell by the Symphony Orchestral Society committee.

Another cancellation . . . the Hubert Fairfaxes' "At Home" for son Vincent and his English bride. It was arranged for Thursday at Elaine, but Mrs. Hubert in her usual frank fashion says "This is no time for large celebrations." Instead she gives an afternoon-tea party this Tuesday in honor of her daughter-in-law Nancy and a luncheon next Wednesday.

Only three days after arriving in Sydney Mrs. Vincent accompanies Mrs. Hubert to the Spring Symphony (for Adult Deaf and Dumb). So perhaps Nancy is charity-minded, and we'll see a lot of her around with Mrs. Hubert at C.W.A. and other things.

When I arrive at the Spring Symphony, there is Mrs. Mick Bruxner counting up the money with a beaming smile which indicates satisfactory returns.

Alix Bremner does some quick-change work to show off latest in peltry. Have you noticed how thoroughly Alix always enjoys any stage work?

Day in a dirndl . . .

DON my dirndl at 8 a.m. Thursday and join the best people at the United Flower Show. Everybody's there with aprons, overalls and gloves, for the working bee necessary to transform the Town Hall before guests arrived at 5 p.m.

Smoko is at 11 a.m. Noreen Dangar comes down from her ladder, Joan Galbraith wipes her hands on her apron, Ruth Watt stops arranging her mixed bowl for a hasty cup o' tea. Mrs. Hubert Gordon discovers she has left at home the sandwiches it took an hour to cut.

Mollie Butters and Mrs. Halse Millett haven't time to stop, as they have dozens of window-boxes to fill with pansies.

Peach trees, orchid displays, orange trees, and thousands of cut flowers from Canberra, Bowral, Leura and Sydney gardens. It is a beautiful display.

Mrs. Robert Dixon, most workmanlike in a dirndl, has been there since 7 a.m. Lady Julius, too, almost had breakfast on the doorstep. They're exhausted by the end of the day.

Won't be uniform . . .

TO the Sydney Hospital Ball committee and discuss shortage of men and flowers for ball at the Australia on September 28. Difficulty is surmounted by asking partners to come in any old uniform they like, and by asking all friends with gardens to forgo their week-end flowers.

Mrs. Hamilton Kirkland comes straight to the meeting after registering for canteen work, which brings to light the fact that Mrs. George Norrie also has registered for the canteen, and that Mrs. Stephen Lynch has offered to drive something, as she feels she would be a better driver than a cook for 40 men.

Joins English society . . .

WELL, don't say I didn't warn you three months ago when Pamela Armstrong left Australia that she was going home to meet the prospective bridegroom's family. Only difference is that war stopped Pam from being in England on her 21st birthday—September 12—when the engagement was announced. The news was cabled from London, but Pam and her mother are in Canada.

Fiance Bill Vestey, as you doubtless know, is of the millionaire cold storage and Blue Star Line Vestey. His father, the Hon. Samuel, is heir to the title.

Another word or two about Bill . . . he wields a nifty squash racquet, having carried off the Australian championship in Sydney last year. And I recall seeing him hit a couple of sixers for the Governor-General's cricket team at Killara last season.

Pam will take into English society Dame Nellie Melba's fabulous collection of jewels, as Dame Nellie left her granddaughter her jewels in addition to a fortune.

Having a fling . . .

IT seems that all ice-minded youngsters at the Ice Festival decided to have a last fling before lessons begin this week. Palais was packed with flying arms and legs of school-going age. And, oh, dear, here it is the end of the season and I still pester about mugs' alley, convinced that skaters are born, not made.

But about this Ice Festival. Held in aid of Prince Henry Hospital. Mrs. Fred Marks drives to town from Oldtrees, her Bowral home, specially for the show, and then back to Bowral again the same night.

Barbara Huntley, Younger Set president, rushes about saying, "Isn't it marvellous!" I hear that Barbara, June Walton, Clare Spruson and Joan Marks soon will begin rifle-shooting practice . . . of course it may be most important in the future for us women to know the wrong end of a gun, but I still think it might be safer in Poland.

Marriage lines . . .

WHAT a week-end it was for the Peter Talts. Griff's wedding to Daisie Osborne on Saturday and Margaret's to Gordon Welsh arranged for Monday. They weren't the large affairs originally planned, but two weddings in one family within three days . . . well, it's enough for anybody.

Met Alice Nall dashing round town in breathless last-minute trousseau shopping. She marries Alf Morgan this Tuesday . . . very quietly owing to illness of bridegroom's mother. Wedding was to have been some weeks hence, but Alf being in Naval Reserve they decided the date immediately.

Country interest . . .

WEDNESDAY . . . Sam Osborne up from Redbank and lunches at Prince's with his mother-in-law, Mrs. Jack Sinclair. I ask Mrs. Sam's whereabouts and discover she is undergoing a permanent wave.

More country interest . . . engagements of Betty Austin and Anthea Mack (both from Trangle) to Leigh Halliday and Gerald Holt, respectively.



• ANN OUTLAW among the home-made toys at the Society of Arts and Crafts Exhibition, which is at Education Department Gallery this week.



• NANCY BIRD discusses a technical point with Reg Swain at the Royal Aero Club luncheon, given in her honor as a welcome home from abroad.



• DARCY WENTWORTH and Edith Richardson, both air-minded, listen to Nancy Bird speaking of experiences abroad . . . Aero Club luncheon.



• CAPTAIN ROBERTSON (Melbourne) takes time off from militia duties to escort Joy Willing to the Air League Ball.

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Valiant

Continued from Page 14

SHE clasped her hands over his arm and looked up at him pleadingly. "Oh, Geoff, it isn't often we get a chance to be alone together like this; like the old days. We may never get another opportunity to talk and be happy before I go back to New York. Anyway, I'm afraid we can't do the work I wanted to do here. I'm terribly disappointed. I didn't want to tell you till we'd had our treat this afternoon, but I telephoned Forsyth and he wasn't there."

He moved his shoulders irritably, like a man who has a job to do and is anxious to get it done and finished with.

"I thought you had the appointment fixed. Now we'll have to hang about for Forsyth. Anyway, we've been alone together, pretty much, for two months. Any other woman but Lella might have made a fuss about it. I'd like to get back to her as soon as possible. Hadn't you better try to get Forsyth on the phone again? Then if we can't see him to-night we could fix an appointment for the morning."

She said slowly: "All right." They found a telephone booth and she went in. The first time she had pretended to call Professor Forsyth Geoff had stood outside, but now he came and stood in the doorway, listening while she made the call. She dialled the number and asked for the professor, and heard, as she had expected to hear, that he was not in Edinburgh.

Dale had learned from Lella that her father was holding a meeting of a small and very select medical society at his own house, and guessed that the professor would travel to London to attend it. She had hoped, she had prayed, that by this time Geoff would have forgotten why they came, forgotten everything but her.

She said with a sort of mechanical dullness: "When will he be back?" and was told, "Not until Monday."

Geoff said, dumbfounded: "You mean he's not here?"

"He's in London until Monday."

"Then—we've come up here for nothing? On a wild-goose chase?"

"So it seems."

They were walking slowly down a quiet street of old Georgian houses. He glanced at her, startled by the expression on her pale, secret face: "Dale—you didn't know of this?"

She swung round and faced him. "Yes, I knew. I hoped you knew, too. But I was wrong. You are blind, blind."

"Dale? But the book—our work—does that mean nothing to you?"

"It means what it has always meant. An excuse to be near you, to hear your voice, to touch your hand," she said passionately. "That's all. That's all it has ever meant. That's why I came back from America. I love you, Geoff."

It was quiet where they stood. Her hands clung to his, her face was very near, her lips pleading and passionate. Gently he disengaged her hands.

"I'm sorry, Dale, I'm terribly sorry—but there can't be anyone else but Lella."

"Oh!" She turned away, the hot tears suddenly scalding down her face. "It's not true. She's too young for you, too childish. She doesn't understand you as I do. And now, she's sure to hear that Forsyth is in London, and she'll know what she should have always known, that you and I belong to each other."

"Dale!" He thrust her away from him, his eyes searching her face. "Dale, do you mean that Lella may learn that we were here for no purpose? That she may learn that Forsyth is in London?"

"I don't see how she can help knowing. Forsyth is down to meet her father."

He turned away blindly. "I must telephone. I must speak to her."

Dale stood for a moment, watching him stride away, back towards his hotel, and then, running swiftly, caught up with him, walking along by his side.

"Geoff! Please forget all I have said. Please let's think of our work. That is the most important thing."

"Dale, you must understand. Lella is the most important thing. It was because of her I started to work with you. Perhaps it was vanity, too, but mostly it was so she should be proud of me. I wanted her to

see I could be more than a country doctor."

He walked away from her, not even listening when she called his name.

When Dale came into the hotel an hour later, Geoff was leaving the telephone, his face a grey mask of anxiety. A little fear stabbed at her.

"Geoff—what is it?"

He looked at her bitterly: "Lella's heard. Tessa says the shock nearly killed her. I've got to get back—her life's at stake—"

Dale was seized with a sudden, frightened compunction, aghast at the depths she had so carefully stirred.

"Is there anything I can do?"

"Nothing, except stay away from us... stay away and give me a chance to mend the wreck you have made. I must get back to-night."

It was early dawn when Geoff came home, white, unshaven and tired. The young doctor from Aylesford was in charge, a little flustered, a little nervous.

Geoff's eyes tore at Tessa's heart. They held an agony that told her he was guilty of nothing except thoughtlessness.

The young doctor said: "I—I don't think we can save them both."

A sound, half protesting cry, half sob, broke from Geoff's lips. He turned and went towards the door. He had to save them both. He had to. He had failed her so miserably. She must have something—something to build her life on again.

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Music in the News.

SUNDAY, September 24.—
June Marsden—Astrology for
Business Folk.

MONDAY, September 25.—
The Australian Women's
Weekly Celebrity Recital.

TUESDAY, September 26.—
June Marsden—Astrology for
Women.

He opened the door quietly, went across to her regardless of the nurse, and knelt beside her, gently brushing the damp hair from her white face.

"Lella."

Her eyes opened, dull and glazed, hopeless.

He said: "I'm here, it's going to be all right, darling. I promise it is going to be all right."

A voice, a whispered ghost of sound, said: "You came back."

He put his lips against her white cheek. "I never went away. Oh, my love, my poor little hurt love, please believe I never really went away."

Her lips seemed too tired to smile, but her eyes answered him.

Geoff had not left Lella's side. He did not leave her even when she slept, a long drugged sleep. When morning came he was still sitting there, haggard, watching until her lashes slowly lifted.

He said quickly, as her lips parted: "You mustn't talk, sweetheart." Her eyes seemed mutely to question him. "I'll tell you about it all some time, not now. Only I love you, sweet, and we're alone together again!"

Her eyes looked around the room, searching, suddenly terrified.

"It's all right—a boy," he told those shadowed, questioning eyes. "He's downstairs. An odd little blighter, but we'll make him worthy of his beautiful mother!"

He put his weary head down on the pillow beside her, and she turned her head with a little contented, nestling movement.

Tessa, coming in, found him kneeling there, asleep, his dark head on the pillow beside hers. Lella awake, smiling, watched his sleep with shining eyes.

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KING and QUEEN through AMERICAN EYES

BOOK ON TOUR SHOWS HOW THEY WON HEARTS OF MILLIONS

When the King and Queen visited Canada and the U.S.A. in June this year they were seen by more than nine million people. They travelled 9000 miles by train and car, more than 1000 miles in processional routes, shook hands with thousands of people and heard "God Save the King" played 173 times in Canada alone.

Only now, looking back over the whole tour, is it possible to see in true perspective its full significance and importance to the English-speaking world.

IN "North America Sees Our King and Queen," Keith V. Gordon gives innumerable sidelights which reflect the amazing enthusiasm with which the tour was received in both Canada and the U.S.A.

Although everything possible was done to avoid it, the strain imposed on the King and Queen throughout their visit must have been terrific.

"Gentlemen, the King! A guy who can take it!" was how one American expressed his admiration of the way in which His Majesty faced the ordeal of continuous travel and cheering crowds.

Several members of the Royal party and a number of journalists travelling with them were much more affected by the pace of travelling and functions than the Royal couple.

The Queen had to change her dresses at least four times a day.

Mr. Powell, her English hair-dresser, travelling as a member of the entourage, had to reset her hair each time she changed, while her maids helped her with her dresses and refreshed her complexion with cold cream.

"Women," says Mr. Gordon, "will fully appreciate that so many changes caused the Queen great

physical and nervous strain, and might have caused any ordinary woman to lose her temper through sheer nerves. But then, Queen Elizabeth is no ordinary woman."

The only effect on the Queen of the long journey and crowded programme was that she lost weight and decided to drink milk three times a day.

There are many souvenirs of the Royal visit in Canada and the U.S.A., apart from presents given by the King and Queen.

The Queen received sometimes twenty or thirty pounds' worth of flowers a day. Most of them she sent to hospitals, and many patients have kept single flowers and sprays from her bouquets to dry and press.

Prized handkerchief

IN Winnipeg the Queen dropped her handkerchief. It was picked up by a woman spectator, who was allowed to keep it.

An umbrella lent to the Queen in Winnipeg is more famous in the district than Mr. Chamberlain's.

A Canadian farmer is keeping as a souvenir a box of matches he lent to the King when his silver cigarette lighter, given to him by the Queen, failed to light.

Mr. Gordon recounts many of the human incidents of the tour which endeared the King and Queen to the thousands who saw them.



TYPICAL SCENE during the tour. The King and Queen waving to cheering thousands as the Royal train leaves a Canadian city.

"Shortly before the Royal train arrived at Regina, the King ordered a stop so that he and the Queen could go for a walk on the prairie. The King walked so fast that soon the rest of the party were left behind.

"Let's run to catch him up!" said his wife, and the Queen of England, her lady-in-waiting, and the King's equerries all ran for a hundred yards across the prairie.

"At the Banff Springs Hotel, Court etiquette was abandoned, and the Royal party and the 80-odd Press people who travelled with them had a brief holiday.

"On one occasion the Queen, walking through one of the hotel lounges, came across an American girl reporter assiduously practising a curtsy before a mirror.

"The girl, forgetting the informality rule, immediately curtseyed to the Queen. She was delighted when the Queen took her by the hand, and insisted that they should

practise the curtsy together before the mirror.

"Catering for the Royal travellers was a romantic story in itself.

"When the Provincial Government's banquet in Quebec was being planned the organisers heard the King was fond of peaches, so peaches at five shillings each were flown from California. Then the chef was told the King liked brook trout.

Anglers to rescue

QUEBEC'S game laws forbade the buying and selling of game fish so the idea was abandoned, but Canadian fishermen heard about it. Hundreds of them set out for the mountains and brought back enough trout to feed 1000 guests."

Describing the organisation of the tour, Mr. Gordon tells how, because of the international situation, the liner Empress of Australia was substituted for a warship for the journey across the Atlantic.

"Night and day five hundred workmen swarmed over the great ship. Up her four gangways a chain of porters carried into her holds choice foods, rare wines from the cellars at Buckingham Palace, pigeons from Bordeaux sent by aeroplane; fifty live crabs; a hundred-weight of Wiltshire bacon; eggs from Windsor; beef from Scotland; fresh fruit from Royal orchards."

Forty trunks were needed for the Queen's wardrobe, which included sixty dresses and ensembles.

Mr. Gordon's book shows how the Royal visit cemented the ties between Britain and America at a critical time in the world's history. Since then Canada, together with her sister Dominions, has shown in a tangible way her loyalty to the British Throne and the British ideal.

"North America Sees Our King and Queen." By Keith V. Gordon (Hutchinson). Our copy from the publishers.

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"Now then, just which way are you going, young lady?"
"My horse hasn't made up his mind yet."

Some NEW LAUGHS



FAIR MOTORIST: What is the state of the road ahead?
SWAGGIE: Pretty rough, lady. I had to tie the lid on my billy coming along.

"Most jokes were old and mellow when we were seventeen.
When we are old and mellow they'll still be evergreen."



"Phyllis is a decided blonde, isn't she?"
"Yes, I was with her when she decided!"



WIFE: How did you get on?
WRESTLER: It was easy. I put him to sleep in ten minutes.
WIFE: Well see what you can do with the baby now. She's been howling all the evening.

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economy to
buy cheap
imitations

Brainwaves

A prize of 2/6 is paid for
each joke used.

"WHY is that woman so nice to the hotel clerk?"
"He's written 'Suite Sixteen' opposite her name in the hotel register."

THE preoccupied customer walked into the barber's shop and sat in a chair next to a woman who was having her hair bobbed.
"Haircut, please," he ordered.
"Certainly," said the barber. "But if you really want a haircut, would you mind taking off your hat?"
"Sorry," the customer apologised as he looked around. "I didn't know there was a lady present!"

"YESTERDAY we had the first quarrel of our married life. I had already packed my bag to go home to mother when . . ."
"Yes?"
"My husband refused to carry it to the station."

TWO burglars had broken into a tailor's shop and were sorting out some suits when one of them saw one marked £10/10/-.
"Bert, look at the price of that one," he said. "Why, it's downright robbery, isn't it?"

HUSBAND: I have only one button left on my coat.
Wife: Yes, it does look bad. Pull it off!



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Fridays, 6.30 p.m. 4SB Sundays, 8.15 p.m.

An Editorial **GAMELIN... France's military genius**

SEPTEMBER 23, 1939

THE BREED HOLDS GOOD



OUT of the brave deeds already reported in this war individual heroism like that of an unnamed British pilot during an attempted German air raid has all the quality of an epic.

His plane was shot down. He made a forced landing, and almost before the plane had come to rest the pilot had run across a field and commandeered a car. He then drove to the hangars and got another plane.

A few minutes later he was in the air again taking his part in the successful holding off of the enemy planes.

Just a little incident of the war, but incidents of this sort speak eloquently of the calibre of a nation.

The moral in it is that the breed holds good, that the quick thinking of this courageous airman is an indication of how the youth of Britain looks on the war now that the nation has become involved.

Before the conflict the German propaganda machine churned out an immense amount of "dope" about the decadence of English youth.

Similar yarns were spun in 1914, but the Germans were disagreeably surprised at the prodigious efforts of the effete English.

To-day history has repeated itself.

Every young soldier carries with him the knowledge that he is not fighting for anybody's territory. He is armed in defence of an ideal.

We didn't want war, we did everything to keep out of it, but now that we are in it our enemies will find that the men who are fighting for peace are more than soldiers. They are crusaders ready for any sacrifice. They may detest war, but they will fight keenly, for their eyes are seeking the peace that lies beyond it — a Peace the youth of the world is determined this time shall be permanent.

—THE EDITOR.

Gallant little soldier says he will roll up Siegfried Line

By MICHAEL SHERIDAN

WHILE Hitler stamps throughout Germany wearing his ridiculous hair-do and dramatising himself hysterically, France is calmly pinning her faith to Marie Gamelin, generalissimo of her military forces and the greatest strategist in Europe to-day.

The French are a military race. They expect a lot from their generals and are chary with their praise.

But Gamelin, neat little grey soldier of the Republic, has more than once delivered the goods, and France has every faith in him.

He says he can roll up the Siegfried Line, and France believes he can.

Gamelin is not the Englishman's traditional idea of a Frenchman.

He is not a dashing, debonair soldier shouting "Vive La France" and

flourishing a shining sword with tremendous elan, but a professional soldier who in his dark grey civilian clothes looks like a prosperous business man.

He is small—5ft. 4in.—very trim and neat, with piercing grey eyes—eyes that remind you of Kitchener (whom he resembles in photographs taken during the Great War). He knows the terrain of every part of France—has sketched it—made maps of it—and that knowledge is neatly catalogued in that fine brain of his.

Gamelin, like the Duke of Windsor, has a prodigious memory for faces. Sub-lieutenants are delighted to find that the General knows their names and records, can talk with them of their regiment and its history.

The Marshal is steeped in the highest military tradition. His great-grandfather was one of Napoleon's generals and afterwards military governor of Phalsbourg. His grandfather was the last French Governor of Strasbourg before the Franco-Prussian War. His father was Comptroller-General of the French army.

No wonder the young Marie Gamelin became a soldier.

It was generally accepted. His mother, a talented artist, painted him as a child with a war drum.



Had Marie desired it he could have been an artist like his mother. As a matter of fact, he is a splendid watercolorist and one of the best map-makers in the French army.

"You have no sense of speaking to a small man when you address General Gamelin," says an American journalist who met him. "His dignity is great, his bearing almost majestic. He has no poses. He does not wave his hands about. If he does gesture, it is with a quick, precise movement to emphasise a point in his conversation."

In the Great War this man with the quiet voice and the forceful personality spoke very seldom.

When he was military secretary to General Joffre he was the general-



MARSHAL GAMELIN, leader of the Allied Army. He says he can roll up the Siegfried Line.

issimo's devoted junior, said little, and that was to the point... But when he spoke the Marshal listened and acted on his advice.

Advised attack

THE young Gamelin advised Joffre to attack on the Marne. The decision was made, Joffre gave the orders written by Gamelin. How successful the attack was is now history.

France calls Gamelin "The imperturbable one." He never gets excited. He is a man who has learnt the value of silence.

"Strategy is not strategy at all if everybody knows about it," Gamelin once told his officers, so you may be sure his war communiques will be laconic, to say the least of it.

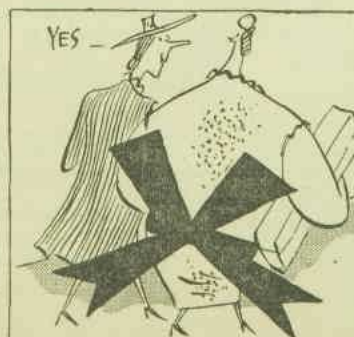
His trim figure is a familiar sight at the Paris Opera House. Accompanied by his wife, whom he married when he was fifty-five, he seldom misses an opera.

Madame Gamelin is fond of old French songs, and the General accompanies her to concerts.

They dine out a lot together. Madame is a striking dark-eyed Frenchwoman, taller than her husband. She has all the chic of the Parisienne—wears black and white, likes small hats and luxurious furs and wraps. She is a true daughter of France and delights in army manoeuvres.

General Gamelin's birthday, which he celebrates on Wednesday of this week, is also his wedding anniversary. His wife is fond of skiing—the General likes to climb up the mountains rather than skim down them.

IN AND OUT OF SOCIETY By WEP



WEP

CHOO, CHOO! Now let us all play trains!



How I helped the railways increase their deficit

I'm glad I gave up being a stationmaster. There's too much responsibility.

Small country stations are the worst, although the big ones are not much better.

ON my last station, scarcely a day passed without a train-wreck of some kind owing to some trifling matter of signals.

A mob of investigating officials visited me while I was dusting the sandwiches in the refreshment-room.

"This won't do!" they said. "You've got four engines and 49 carriages all piled up in a heap at the station. We don't know whether it would be cheaper to shift the wreckage or shift the station."

"Well, you can see how it is," I replied, polishing a bun with my handkerchief, "a man's only got one pair of hands, and if another train comes through while I'm serving in the refreshment-room, or doing a bit of gardening on the platform, that's not my fault."

"Where's your assistant?"
"He got killed a fortnight ago. I had him down on the track polishing the lines outside the station, and a train came along—that's it there. The one lying on its side."

"How did that happen?"
"Well, the lines are a bit knocked about. I think there's a couple of rails missing, here and there."

By
L. W. LOWER

Australia's
Foremost Humorist

★
Illustrated by WEP

"Great heavens! What was that awful crash!"

"That would be the three-fifteen. She's running a bit late. Some of these engine-drivers are terribly careless."

"He couldn't have seen the STOP signal!"

"Hah! That explains it. I forgot all about the signal. How silly of me."

"I'm afraid, my man, that we shall have to relieve you of your post."

"You mean I'm discharged?"

"Yes."

"Sacked?"

"Yes."

"Don't you talk to me like that or I'll resign," I said.

I always say that just because a man has to work for a living is no reason why he should have his dignity injured.

Some bosses are like that. They try to order you about and get you to do things. If it weren't for the wages I get each week, I wouldn't work at all.

There was all my work in the Railway Department gone to waste.

Genius unrecognised

I HAD started off as a packhorse, carrying luggage for miserly, skinflint passengers, opening carriage doors for them and piling their luggage into the racks and all I got for it was a pink smile or perhaps sixpence.

From there I graduated to the ticket office. I didn't last long in there because they said the returns from the sale of tickets fell off fifty per cent. while I was in charge.

They couldn't reconcile this with the fact that there had been still about the same number of tickets sold as before. They even went so far as to say that I'd appropriated half the takings.

I maintained a dignified silence towards this accusation.

After all, I'd let them be in fifty-fifty with me. All they had to do was to supply the tickets and the office and I had to do all the work. And it took every ounce of salesmanship I had to sell some people tickets.

I was showing a fair profit in the ticket office, and at one time thought of printing my own tickets and giving away a free tea-towel with every season ticket bought. But as this would have entailed the employment of a large staff and there was insufficient room in the ticket office, I had to abandon the idea.

After all, there's not a great deal of scope for a man of intelligence in the railway service. The men in charge are not progressive enough.

You know those men who go around trains tapping the wheels with a hammer? I observed this ridiculous procedure and in a special letter to the superintendent I pointed out that the men had no possible chance of knocking a wheel off with the type of hammer used.

I suggested that sledge-hammers be used and offered to demonstrate my ability to smash a wheel right off in one blow.

"I forgot all about the signal," said Stationmaster Lower.
"How silly of me."

This offer was promptly considered by all departments in the usual spirited Public Service manner, and two years later I received a reply rejecting my proposal.

No wonder the railways are running at a loss.

As the Railway Commissioner said to me only the other day, "Every

extra passenger means a definite loss to us. We are trying our utmost to discourage traffic on our railways, but people will insist on going to places."

The Department, however, is trying hard, and by all pulling together and making a supreme effort it is hoped to make a bigger deficit this year than last year.

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with amazing new
REDUCING CORSET

The New Contour Corset will Correct your Figure Faults Instantly—and massage away all Unwanted Fat from Thighs, Hips, Abdomen and Diaphragm. 3 inches in 10 Days—5 inches in 15 Days are reports received daily. The New Contour Corset is Made-To-Measure from a non-rubber Special Reducing Fabric that is Smooth, Light, Soft and Comfy. You'll never have a moment's discomfort in a New Contour Corset.



SPREADING HIPS



BULGING DIAPHRAGM



FULL BACK TYPE



ROLL OVER TOP OF CORSET



New Contour Corsets are Made-To-Measure in our OWN Workrooms (the largest of their kind in Australia) and are Dependable to the last degree—Wearable for many months after other corsets are worn out and forgotten.

SENT ON 10 DAYS' FREE TRIAL!

A BLISSFUL SENSATION

What a Blissful Sensation it is to wrap yourself in a New Contour Corset! How Thrilling it is to let your body surrender to the comfortable "feel" of this Gorgeous Garment! So kindly does it Reduce—So gently does it Support your figure—that you forget you have Hips, Thighs or an Abdomen. You are Always Relaxed—though firmly supported.

SAG-PROOF EDGES

You cannot wrinkle the edges of a New Contour Corset! Bend them, sit on them, they always fly back to their shape—it's because they are reinforced to prevent the slightest trace of sag.

A DUAL-PURPOSE GARMENT

A New Contour Corset not only makes it easy for you to Reduce by the amount you desire—but being especially designed for your requirements—it Gloriously Flatters the most uncontrollable figure—achieving a Sleek, Smooth, Second-Skin Fit—Fashionably Styled for Smartness and Perfectly Suited for Action.

NO MONEY NEEDED

You do not have to buy a New Contour Corset to test its many virtues. SEND YOUR WAIST, HIPS and THIGH Measurements NOW—for We Want you TO WEAR one FOR 10 DAYS AT OUR Expense.

NEW CONTOUR CORSETRY, 58 Dymock's Bldg., 428 George St., Sydney

How can you get a Lovely Complexion

YOU can have that clear, unblemished skin—that outer beauty which comes from inner health—if you remember to take Bile Beans regularly each night.

Bile Beans are purely vegetable; they tone up the system and daily eliminate impurities from the bloodstream. This purified and enriched blood feeds the skin tissues, removes all blemishes and unevenness, and gives what every woman desires—a matchless complexion.

So if you want to be admired for your lovely clear complexion start taking Bile Beans to-night.



"I am a hundred per cent. better in health since I started taking Bile Beans, and my skin is again fresh and clear. I would not miss my nightly Bile Beans for anything."—Mrs. E. Hinds.

"Taking Bile Beans nightly has made all the difference to my appearance. My skin is now a healthy colour, my complexion is blemish-free, my eyes are bright and I get up on a morning feeling rejuvenated."—Mrs. F. S. Britton.

BILE BEANS

SOLD EVERYWHERE

AND I know something for nearly every day, except the Trots, and although the two-year-old trials are not an organised meeting you can get a few shillings on if you get a whisper about one of the speedy early gallopers from the right source.

The two-year-old trials are like a picnic meeting—organised just up to a point to leave a little uncertainty about things.

No jockeys are announced, or scratchings. You view the field, see who hasn't turned up to participate, and they are the scratchings. You note the jockeys if you know them well enough to recognise them.

I will be all right, I am getting to know even the unknown jockeys and the youngest apprentices.

The Victoria Park Club sells the racebooks at a shilling. This ad-

Betty's "racey" narratives

You can have spring racing on every day of this week

By BETTY GEE

What a whirl of spring racing we can have this week if we are sport-minded, with a meeting of some kind every day of the week.

Trots Monday, Newcastle Tuesday and Thursday, Warwick Farm Wednesday, the two-year-old trials at Victoria Park on Friday, and Rosehill again on Saturday.

miss you to the course, and the club just across the paddocks from the South Sydney Hospital, situated Two thousand people turn up.

Bookies bet on the quiet, and the police don't molest them because I suppose it is questionable whether it is illegal because, after all, they're on a racecourse, aren't they?

You can get a pound on, or a shilling. The best place to get if you want to pick winners is down in the flat where the horses pass on their way to the starting barrier. You ask the jockeys which they fancy. Having ridden them in work on the tracks for the last two months, they usually know pretty well.

Darby Munro's roguish eyes brighten wickedly as he tells you to be on No. 16, knowing that here's an occasion when the racing rules don't prevent you from "tampering with a jockey."

The whole thing is run in the



ANNE is the Page Boy's tip for the Three-Year-Old Handicap at Warwick Farm.

carnival spirit. It does much good, too. While educating the young thoroughbreds in the proper business of racing, it throws light on the rich Breeders' Plate and Gimcrack Stakes, worth £1500 each, run about ten days later at Randwick.

Take last year for instance. I saw Beaucaire and Royal Sceptre win heats, and they dead-heated for first in the Breeders' Plate. And Merry Smile and Anne were also winners, and they ran first and second in the Gimcrack.

There are to be 11 heats at Victoria Park this Friday. And here are a few I know can gallop, and are likely to win trials—St. Andrew, Tidal Wave, Broadcaster, Miss Winooka, Fearless Fox, and Merry Myra. You can have a bit of fun getting your shilling bets on those.

But now let's get down to real business. I've had the tip that Mr. Hugh Munro, his owner, would give anything to win the Cameron Handicap at Newcastle this Tuesday, and the handicapper has given him every chance with a light weight on Red Thespian.

At Newcastle

I've had a strong tip from the Ice Man that Hybol is going up for the Newcastle Cup on Thursday "and is sure to win it too, Mum."

The races at Warwick Farm this Wednesday are likely to be hard and a little indigestible, but I've had a strong tip for Anne in the Three-Year-Old.

My little Page Boy gives me this as a certainty. He usually gets good information, and we all know Anne is a smart young lady, and her father was the champion Winooka.

Tuhitarata has been saved up for a killing in the Flying, and Mrs. Dol Clayton tells me to get on to her Tony for the Green Hills Handicap.

Then on Saturday we go to the Hawkesbury races, but not at Hawkesbury. No! The old club has borrowed Rosehill for the day, and it should be a great meeting with a weight-for-age race and almost all the cracks are running, I believe.

I've had a whisper that Defaulter won't be able to start in the Clarendon Stakes, and if he doesn't, then the race is a sitter for Beau Vite.

Dashing Beau Vite

WE all saw what a dashing horse Beau Vite is, and how it gave Defaulter a shock at Randwick by almost winning. Good judges say it will win both Derbies.

Delmestor has been bottled up for the Quality Handicap, and why wouldn't she win such a race, because she represents the highest sprint quality, and she's better this year than ever she has been before, her owner, Ken Stuart, tells me.

Col. Rutledge's Goose Boy has been saved up for the Novice Handicap, and I'm told he's the makings of a good horse and to follow him up ad libitum.

Defaulter has suffered from a wrenched joint. He did it while winning the Chelmsford Stakes. Strange how the legs of these mighty champions are so fragile.

And they can't take the risk of racing a thoroughbred weighing over 11cwt. on a leg that is not sound. It would cripple him.

So whether Defaulter can race at the Hawkesbury meeting was in doubt last week. Wouldn't it be dreadful if he failed to recover in time for the Melbourne Cup; but there was a doubt even about that.



What a lovely Australian advised

LADY HELEN LEARNS ABOUT AUSTRALIAN BEAUTY CULTURE



WHEN MORTIMER BROKE THE NEWS that we were off for a sojourn in Australia, (everyone seems to go there nowadays), my first thought was to call on Linda, the glamorous and talented Australian who married into Dehrett three years ago. "Tell me about clothes and things," I begged. "What does one wear . . . and when . . . ?"

The glamour of "the English Complexion" owes much to the Yardley preparations. Yardley Lavender, 3/- to 21/-; Soap, 1/6; Face Powder, 2/6 and 3/6; English Complexion Cream, 5/6. With other Yardley preparations at leading chemists and fine stores.



BEFORE SHE COULD ANSWER I had another brain-storm. "What do Australian girls do about their complexions?" I asked. "Doesn't the great outdoors ruin them?" "Not at all, my dear," Linda reassured me, "if you just do as you've always done." "But," I wailed, "I can't take trunks of Yardley Lavender and Soaps and Creams with me . . ."



"YOU WON'T NEED TO," Linda soothed, "the Yardley complexion care is as much a part of the intelligent Australian woman's grooming as of yours. They really have the most marvellous skins—and don't they know just how to look after them! Wherever you are in Australia, you'll find a shop that sells Yardley."

YARDLEY LAVENDER



YARDLEY & COMPANY (PTY.) LIMITED, SYDNEY. And at 33 Old Broad Street, LONDON. NEW YORK—PARIS—TORONTO

SUCCESSES for SUMMER...



● STRIKING SUMMER HAT of white baku with new brim treatment and a new angle of adjustment.



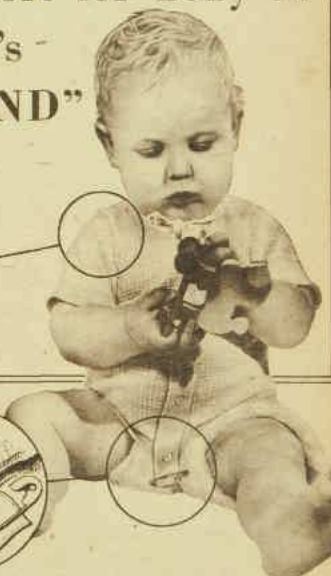
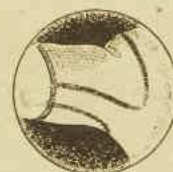
● NAVY-BLUE leather gloves with perforated suede backs. Handbag of navy leather with narrow stripes of machine stitching forming stripes in even width.

● GLOVES of blue kid latticed with red kid. Small perforations between lattices. (Left.)



● LATEST FROM PARIS. A committee of artists voted in favor of this summer model. It is of gimpure lace with a hollow crown supported at the top by wire.

More Comfort for Baby in a Bond's "NEVABIND" Shirt



The Clinics recommend "Nevabind," with all these features to make baby comfier and happier.

1. Sleeves designed without underarm seams (see above) to chafe and bind baby's arms. "Nevabind" is the only baby shirt with this improvement.

2. Front opening to save struggling and squirming when you're putting it over baby's head. And there's reinforcement right down behind the buttons.

3. A firm little tab where you fasten on the nappy keeps the shirt in place without riding up.

Bond's

"NEVABIND"
BABY SHIRTS

Silk and wool with short sleeves, all infants sizes, 2/11. Silk and cotton, short sleeves, 2/6. Sleeveless, 1/11.

Sold at all leading Infants' Clothing Stores

RACE DAYS . . .



• IDEAL FOR THE RACES is this dashing legionnaire-blue crepe bolero frock, pinked out in stark-white broderie anglaise.

• A VIVACIOUS EXAMPLE of the silk suit in lobster-pink and white printed crepe. White shark-skin jacket and patterned revers.

• CRISP AS A NEW BANKNOTE. Brown-and-white check taffeta suit with little girl blouse of starched white lawn.

• FOR A SUCCESSFUL DAY, black-tucked organdie with a froth of stiffened white muslin. Scarlet moire encircles the waist. The profile hat revives the ruching.

Rose

... and NIGHTS



• LACE is so feminine. Here it is with all its delicate charm, hyacinth-blue accented in black.

• VIOLET TAFFETA bunched into a bustle bow as shown in inset above. Lace ruffle and deep flounce.

• HEAVY BLACK guipure accents and black satin gloves give high sophistication to a gown of Mayfair-pink satin.

• FOR GALA NIGHTS. Bright blue velvet fitted top and billowy skirt of white organdie to match the pierrette shoulder ruffle.



Luxury for your leisure hours

Satin-smooth swami for a house coat. Luxurious? Yes, but bless you, why not? It's princess style with a swagger flared skirt at ankle length. It buttons clean up the front to the pert Peter Pan collar (the easiest thing to slip into!) And for drama, full sleeves with lavish embroidery! Peachglow, sky, lettuce and black. SW, W, OS. (No. HC-54). Price 19/11

Bond's
LOVELIER THAN EVER
Underlovelies

AT ALL SMART STORES: LOOK FOR THE BOND'S LABEL ON EVERY GARMENT

By air mail from MARY ST. CLAIRE

PARIS SNAPSHOTS

Sketched by PETROV



1 TRAVEL HATS that can be packed in one's suitcase because they shut up concertina fashion, like the picnic tumbler, are in great demand. They are made in straw or felt bands mounted on chiffon and are unbelievably light to wear as well as being easy to pack.

2 DRAMATIC black lace boas, worn over the front of the shoulders and hanging down the back, are popular evening wraps.

Wide Chantilly lace, well stiffened so that it stands out around the face giving the wearer a mystic quality, is gathered on to a black velvet ribbon and finished at the ends with silk tassels.

3 SEQUIN HOODS in the most brilliant colors are being worn in the evening to protect heads from the high winds that have played havoc in Paris during the greater part of the summer. They are worn with elbow-length fur capes which, for the time being, seem to have taken the place of evening coats or wraps.

4 JEWELLERY made of shells linked on fine gold chains is very popular. Earrings of tiny linked shells are as much as four inches long, while others of mother-of-pearl form a thin band over the top of the ears. Necklaces of spikes of mother-of-pearl, made like the shark's teeth necklaces worn by South Sea Islanders, are also very much the mode.

5 STRIPED SATIN jockey shirts are "the thing" for wear with smart suits. With the stripes running horizontally they combine such colorings as petunia and primrose, green and chocolate, sky and old gold, or peach and rose.

6 WAISTCOATS of satin elaborately quilted provide an attractive alternative to the blouse. A favorite color is crayfish-pink and they are usually topped with a bead-embroidered dog collar of black velvet.

PETROV

six

CREATED BY LUCAS

Spectator

SPORTSWEAR

THE ANSWER TO EVERY MAIDEN'S PRAYER!
 . . . so SMART . . . so EASY TO WASH . . . just
 WON'T CREASE or RUMPLE . . . in such PERFECT
 COLOURS and DESIGNS, . . .
 . . . and, above all, GUARANTEED!



1

1 EVERLOC

Carrying the famous Guarantee "Won't crush, shrink, or fade—WILL WASH." You can select from two dozen marvellous designs, each in seven up-to-the-minute shades. . . . From 35/-



2

2 SHARKTEX

Crisply tailored, and with a debonair look that'll bring you a shower of compliments. Washes like a hankie, and, of course, guaranteed not to fade or shrink. In ten inspired colours. . . .

From 25/11

3 floraloc

Throw it into a week-end case and you'll find it serenely sleek and with nary a crease when you pull it out at journey's end. New York and Paris inspired the breath-taking designs and colours. . . .

From 39/11



3

There's a store close by that stocks Spectator Sportswear — we'll tell you its name if you let us know where you are. Write, too, for a brochure with cuttings of fabrics and illustrating twelve of the smartest styles.

E. LUCAS & CO. PTY. LTD.,
 27 FLINDERS LANE,
 MELBOURNE.

ALWAYS LOOK FOR THE LABEL



Matching set in exquisitely sheer Petal-bloom. Perfectly tailored vest and knickers with form-fitting slip . . . all featuring unusual applique embroidery. In Aquagreen, Camelia, and White. Vest and Knickers, 5/11 each. Slip, 10/6.

Featured in the new Lustre range are the most unusual glorious textures of infinite variety . . . plain, lacy and flower-spangled . . . in the loveliest possible shades. See the enormous new range of Lustre undies and nightwear at all stores . . . exclusive styles, perfect fit . . . with a loveliness that really lasts, wash after wash.

Lustre
FINE LINGERIE & HOSIERY

LOOK FOR THE LUSTRE LABEL

Sweet-pea design for a luncheon or supper set

NEEDLEWORK NOTIONS

WORK it in any of the lovely natural shades of the sweet-pea—pinks, mauves, blues, or purple. The finished effect of the cloth will be charming.

THE set is obtainable from our Needlework Department traced on white, cream, blue, yellow, pink or green Irish linen.

On white or cream, for instance, the design would look very effective worked in mauve shading to purple (Nos. P.411 and P.412), or in blues (Nos. P.506 and P.507.)

Work the flowers and leaves in satin-stitch and the stems in stem-stitch. Buttonhole the basket part and cut away.

Prices are:—

Cloth, 36 x 36 inches, 7/6.

Cloth, 45 x 45 inches, 8/9.

Cloth, 54 x 54 inches, 11/6.

Cloth, 72 x 72 inches, 17/6.

Cloth, 72 x 90 inches, 19/6.

Serviette, 11 x 11 inches, 1/-.

Serviette, 15 x 15 inches, 1/2.

Tea-cosy, 13 x 10 inches, 2/6.

Traymobile Cloth, 14 x 25 inches, 4/6.

Doyley, 8 x 8 inches, 1/-.

Doyley, 5 x 11 inches, 1/-.

Stranded cottons for working may also be obtained from our Needlework Department at 11d. per skein.



START WORK on this attractive supper or luncheon set right away. The sweet-pea design is most effective worked in pastel shades.



ANY small girl will look in the mirror twice when arrayed in this dainty embroidered frock.

DAINTY FROCK for a TODDLER

● It's amazing how soon little girls become clothes-conscious. Your baby daughter will be very proud of her appearance in this dainty embroidered dress.

MAKE it for her as a "best" frock for summer—it would be charming to wear to a birthday party.

You may obtain the frock all ready traced with the pattern and embroidery from our Needlework Department.

All you have to do is work the embroidery, cut out and make up.

It is available for sizes 1-2 or 2-4 years, traced on white, cream or pink georgette, or on white crepe-de-chine.

Prices are, for georgette, 5/6; for crepe-de-chine, 6/11.

If you prefer to make a frock from some other material you may obtain the pattern only at 10d.

Send to This Address!

Adelaide: Box 388A, G.P.O.
Brisbane: Box 409F, G.P.O.
Melbourne: Box 185, G.P.O.
Newcastle: Box 41, G.P.O.
Perth: Box 491G, G.P.O. Sydney: Box 4299YY, G.P.O. If calling, 168 Castlereagh Street, or Dalton House, 115 Pitt Street. Tasmania: Write to The Australian Women's Weekly, Box 185, G.P.O. Melbourne. New Zealand: Write to Sydney office.

Add an . . .

EMBROIDERED BLOUSE to your wardrobe

THE essence of spring freshness, this blouse would be a welcome addition to your wardrobe.

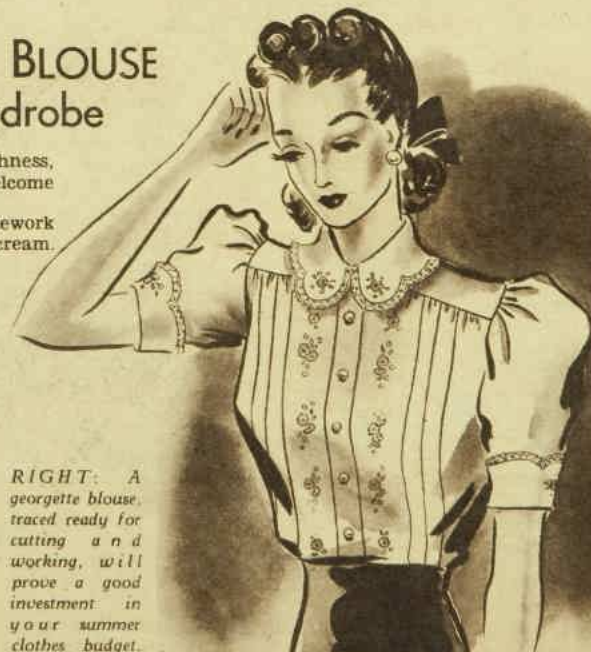
Obtainable from our Needlework Department traced on white, cream, or pink georgette, it would be excellent to wear with silk suits.

It would be just as suitable, of course, for a lightweight wool suit, and thus provide a nice compromise on those in-between days which are cold in the morning and warm at noon.

Pattern and embroidery are all ready traced on the material, and lace for collars and cuffs is also included.

Sizes available are 32, 34, 36, and 38 bust, and the price is 5/6, including postage.

Should you want the pattern only, you may obtain it for 1/1.



RIGHT: A georgette blouse, traced ready for cutting and working, will prove a good investment in your summer clothes budget.

OUR PATTERN SERVICE

WW3063



WW3061

WW3062

WW3064

WW3067

WW3066

WW3061.—For informal wear. 32 to 38 bust. Requires: 4yds., 36ins. wide. Pattern, 1/1.

WW3062. — Pretty outdoor dress. 32 to 38 bust. Requires: 4½yds., 36ins. wide, ¾yd. contrast, 36ins. wide. Pattern, 1/1.

WW3063. — Three smart jackets. 32 to 38 bust. Requires: No. 1, 1½yds., 36ins. wide. No. 2, 1½yds., 36ins. wide. No. 3, 1½yds., 36ins. wide, ¾yd. contrast. Pattern, 1/1. Complete 3 styles.

WW3064.—Three bodice tops for sheer blouses. 32 to 38 bust. Requires: No. 1, ¾yd. 36ins. wide. No. 2, ¾yd., 36ins. wide. No. 3, ¾yd., 36ins. wide. Pattern, 1/1. Complete 3 styles.

WW3065. — Youthful dressy style. 32 to 38 bust. Requires: 4yds., 36ins. wide, ¾yd. contrast. Pattern, 1/1.

WW3066.—Evening frock. 32 to 38 bust. Requires: 8½yds. for skirt, 1½yds. for bodice, 36ins. wide. Pattern, 1/1.

WW3067.—Charming style. 32 to 38 bust. Requires: 6½yds. for frock, 2½yds., 36ins. wide, for jacket. Pattern, 1/1.

Special Concession Pattern



Concession Coupon

Available for one month from date of issue. 3d. stamp must be forwarded for each coupon enclosed. Patterns over one month old, 3d. extra. Send your order to "Pattern Department," to the address in your State, as under.

Box 388A, G.P.O., Adelaide.
Box 409F, G.P.O., Brisbane.
Box 185, G.P.O., Melbourne.
Box 41, G.P.O., Newcastle.
Box 491G, G.P.O., Perth.
Box 4299YY, G.P.O., Sydney.
Tasmania: Box 185, G.P.O., Melbourne.
N.Z.: Box 4299YY, G.P.O., Sydney. (N.Z. readers, use money orders only.)

Patterns may be called for at addresses appearing on page 3.
PRINT NAME AND ADDRESS CLEARLY IN BLOCK LETTERS.

NAME.....
STREET.....
TOWN.....
STATE.....
SIZE..... Pattern Coupon, 23/6/39.

THREE (3) DELIGHTFUL FROCKS AND A JACKET for daytime wear. Sizes, 32in., 34in., 36in. bust. No. 1, Frock and Jacket, requires 3 7-8yd. for frock, 1½yd. for bolero and ¾yd. contrast 36in. wide. No. 2, Frock, requires 4½yd., 36in. wide, 2yd. frilling. No. 3, Frock, requires 4yd. for frock, ¾yd. contrast, 36in. wide.

Please Note

To ensure prompt despatch of patterns ordered by post you should: * Write your name and full address in block letters. * Be sure to include necessary stamps and postal notes. * State size required. * For children, state age of child. * Use box numbers given on concession coupon.



Eyes for you alone

You're the only girl in the world to him—keep him thinking so! Look your loveliest always with Three Flowers, the face powder that creates an aura of romance—an atmosphere of glamour about you! A smooth, fine texture... a delicate flower fragrance... a subtle transparency that permits warm, natural skin tones to glow... enchantingly through—these are the qualities that make Three Flowers the powder of smart women the world over, that will make you, too, want to adopt this powder for your very own. In two sizes—3/9 and 2/6.

Three Flowers Vanishing Cream. For that perfect powder base—a smooth, lovely skin devoid of shine and roughness—try Three Flowers Vanishing Cream and see how evenly, how softly and lastingly, your powder will adhere! Jars 2/6—tubes 1/6.

three flowers
FACE POWDER

RICHARD HUDNUT

PAIN
that kept her
in bed

Terrible, dragging, Spasms
so Bad She Missed a Day
from Work Every Month.

Discover for yourself the different—
quicker, more complete and more lasting relief of period pain that
you can get with a couple of little MYZONE tablets.

When your poor back feels as though it is being drawn
to the front—when you want to sit down and cry with
the pain and that terrible feeling of weakness... let
MYZONE's marvellous *actin* (anti-spasm) compound
bring you blessed comfort, and a pleasant, quick, com-
plete relief such as you've never known with anything
else.



"It's remarkable how MYZONE
banishes that languid, despond-
ent feeling! It is science's
greatest gift to women!"

Just take a couple of MYZONE
tablets with water or a cup of
tea. Try MYZONE with your very
next "pain." Notice how there is
no doping effect.

2/- box. All Chemists.



HOPING TO BECOME the first American girl pilot of an airship, Mary Joyce Walsh, of Miami, is now taking lessons at one of the leading U.S.A. airports. A university student, Miss Walsh was "Miss Florida" at the World's Fair at New York.

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

ASTROLOGY BY JUNE MARSDEN

President Australian Astrological Research Society

In nearly all marriages, the chances of happiness are only as great as the dangers of discord.

ASTROLOGICAL records, however, show that people born under the sign of Virgo—between August 24 and September 23—are in greater danger, proportionately, than the majority of those born under other zodiacal radiations.

This should not be so, because Virgoans are blessed with a keener mentality and higher ideals than most people. But herein lies the danger. The perfection of these individuals makes them fussy, extremely methodical and precise, and so exacting, analytical and critical that others find it extremely hard to live up to them.

Nothing but the best is good enough for them, and in their anxiety to strive after perfection they are apt to forget that others may have entirely different ideas.

Very few Virgoans give their affections carelessly or ardently. They marry with reservation, or else with such single-mindedness that the object of their affections soon finds himself placed upon an impossible pedestal.

Woe betide this person if he dares to tumble. The Virgoan feels "let down" and humiliated, and regards the defection as a personal failure and a reflection upon her own integrity.

Criticism follows, and when this is resented or ignored the Virgoan feels misjudged, ill-treated, and rather sorry for herself. She is convinced she is in the right, and it has to be admitted that she usually is.

Need for caution

THIS is the time the Virgoan must be cautious. To pursue the matter with unrelenting fervor is to court disaster. The opposition is liable to grow defiant, and something has to smash. Very often it is the bond of matrimony.

Wise Virgoans will therefore learn when to criticise and when to be tolerant and less exacting than they would like to be. Those who have been taught these things early in life have much to be thankful for; those who can love others so much that they can overlook their faults have won the biggest battle of all.

The most important thing, of course, is to choose the correct marriage partner in the first place. Having done this, the special characteristics and abilities must be studied. Thereafter encourage and enthuse over those things which are good and make allowances for

those which are not so good. This way happiness lies.

Virgoans will find that they can harmonise with most people if they try hard enough, and use their splendid intellects wisely. As a rule, however, their best partners are those born under the signs of Capricorn (December 22 to January 20), Taurus (April 21 to May 22), Cancer (June 22 to July 23), Scorpio (October 24 to November 23), and their own sign, Virgo (August 24 to September 23).

The Daily Diary

UTILISE the following information in your daily affairs. It should prove interesting.

ARIES (March 21 to April 21): Get important and urgent matters started on September 19 and 20, unless they can wait some weeks. The latter course would be better. Be careful after the 24th.

TAURUS (April 21 to May 22): Here's the chance Virgoans have been crying for. The stars favor most of you on September 21, 22 and 23 (to midday only). Don't waste time then. Seek favors, make changes, start new ventures, stabilize your affairs. Be cautious on Sept. 22 (p.m.), 24, and 25.

GEMINI (May 22 to June 23): Be extremely cautious on September 18 (evening), 19 and 20. Allow for delays, difficulties and upsets. Sept. 24 and 25, however, should be utilized fully for making advancement.

CANCER (June 22 to July 23): Very fair on September 16 (after noon), 17 and 18 (to dusk), for semi-important matters if they cannot wait over for some weeks. Meanwhile live cautiously on Sept. 20, 29, and 30.

LEO (July 23 to August 24): Unpredictable week for most Leos. Things improve somewhat on Sept. 23 (p.m. only), 24 and 25.

VIRGO (August 24 to September 23): Get all outstanding matters in good working order now. Make the most of September 21, 22 and 23 (daylight). Hard work can produce good results now or later on.

LIRA (September 22 to October 24): Plan for the near future. Meanwhile September 22 (after 2 p.m.) gives promise of fair success, and Sept. 24 and 25 even better. These days should be utilized.

SCORPIO (October 24 to November 23): September 16 (p.m. hours only), 17 and 18 very fair for most Scorpios who work hard and wisely.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23 to December 22): You have probably had some difficult weeks, but a slight change for the better is on the way. Sept. 26 (after noon), 29, and 30 very fair.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 19): Plan ahead. Your stars will begin to send a light in your direction, Sept. 23 (after noon), and Sept. 24 and 25 excellent.

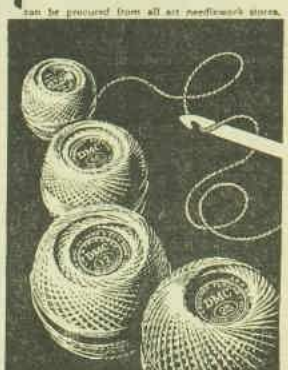
PISCES (February 19 to March 21): Your troubles are nearly over for some time to come. Most Pisceans have been suffering losses, discord, partings, and upsets. Take things quietly just a while longer, especially on September 18 (late), 19, and 20. Slightly better on Sept. 20 and 21.

(The Australian Women's Weekly presents this series of articles on astrology as a matter of interest, without accepting responsibility for the statements contained in them. June Marsden regrets that she is unable to answer any letters.—Editor, A.W.W.)

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or plum calf T-
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P. MAHER, 17 O'Connell St., Sydney.

Wings North

Continued from Page 9

THIS was specific with a vengeance. Court shook his head with a slow grin; he imitated McBain's irritation of a moment before. "Come, come, lieutenant. If that were true, do you think I'd admit it in any circumstances?"

"If it is not true, just why are you here, at Atherton, in midwinter? Why wire McGinn to meet you here? Why charter a plane at Edmonton—the same plane used by the expedition, incidentally—with orders to have it delivered here, serviced and fuelled for a thousand-mile trip?"

"H'm.m," said Court. "Your files are complete, eh? I don't believe I'll answer that, lieutenant. Instead, I'll ask you this: In the event all your suspicions are correct, just what is your official interest in the matter?"

"This," said McBain simply. "It's entirely within our province to prevent you from attempting such a risky venture if, in our judgment, your equipment and preparation are inadequate."

"So?" Court stroked his jaw thoughtfully. "I'm beginning to see daylight in the swamps. Not bad, at that. Who's behind this official interest?"

"What do you mean, sir?" "We're calling a spade a spade," Court reminded. "Whose axe are you grinding? Who, working through you, is determined to see to it that I don't risk my own neck?" He leaned his weight on the desk, looking down quizzically; he lowered his voice: "Not, by any chance, a great warty reptile in the local political puddle known as—Buckley?"

McBain was plainly staggered at such bluntness. He took refuge in mild official reproach:

"It's fortunate this is a confidential conversation, Mr. Stewart. Those are dangerous sentiments even to whisper in this region. 'A great warty reptile,' did you say? A cold, remote twinkle glinted in his eyes; it was gone as quickly. "I

must inform you that Sir Thorncliffe Buckley is a distinguished citizen of the Dominion. A former M.P. One of the leaders of his party, knighted for his services to the Crown—"

"Yes, yes," said Court. They were more nearly speaking the same language now. "I know. Just before the railroad scandals, when the public learned what the bill would be, and just why, and at what cost, steel was laid along certain routes. Just after the land-grant upheaval, to which Buckley pointed with indignation with one hand, and with the other—" He shrugged. "Never mind the rest of it. But since this is confidential, lieutenant, remember that I've spent half my life on each side of the line. We haven't a corner on a certain type of politician on our side. Let's hurry by Buckley's public-spirited impulses. The point is, I might find my way smoothed a bit—just a little bit—if I were to call on Buckley?"

McBain stroked his thin lip, looking up from beneath an arched eyebrow. "You might."

A dry quality in his voice—his first touch of grim humor—reaffirmed their understanding. They were on the opposite sides of the fence, but McBain was giving a fair warning, inviting a meeting of minds.

"For example, lieutenant, let's assume that I had a little jaunt north in mind. Let's assume further that your department—solely from a benevolent interest in my welfare—decided that the risk was too great. Buckley could straighten out these little difficulties, perhaps?"

"He might. He controls the Inland Trading and Transportation Company—"

"Limited?"

"Limited. The company is known locally—and ah—somewhat facetiously as 'TNT.' It also happens that TNT has food and fuel caches located in various parts of the north. If we were assured that, in the event of some misfortune, you would have access to these supplies—"

Worries of a Housewife

I'm not the kind of woman to be left in charge of house. When the cat is blessed with kittens and neglects the pantry mouse. When the gas stove in the kitchen lies in wait to go off pop. And we're always out of sugar when the grocer's shut up shop. When the crazy old bath-heater seems to look me in the face. As though to say, "I'll blow you up and put you in your place." The sink fills up with tea-leaves, and the washer will not work. And the house is full of corners where the awful dust will lurk.



I'm not the kind of woman that a cut-glass dish can stand. The very strongest of them goes to pieces in "me hand." The hinges come off cupboards, and the plants are "ate" by snails. The whitest washing falls in mud because the darn line fails.



The blowflies find the mutton and the window sashes break. The milkman finds no can out, someone steals the garden rake. The ants they come in thousands, and the hawkers do as well. When they find an easy victim, and they sell, sell, sell. And always when I'm off to town away from dust and toil... that I've left the milk to boil.

—Pizzie O'Harris Pratt.



"I see. It's becoming more simple by the minute. Wait!" Court grinned outright. "Don't tell me that Buckley's here in town? Just happens to be?"

"By a coincidence, yes. Not here, but over at Skyline Lake. With a party of guests. For Sir Thorncliffe's convenience, the road has been ploughed to the lake you know. Incidentally, I saw the Buckley car and chauffeur down the street. At the hotel. Another happy coincidence, what?"

"Remarkable," Court agreed. "Lieutenant, will you give Buckley a message for me?"

"It won't be necessary, I think. Sooner or later—I state this plainly, Mr. Stewart—your trail must inevitably cross Sir Thorncliffe's."

"Perhaps," said Court. "If not, tell him this: No man living, except Skinner McGinn, will have a cut in the Swiftwater Stewart discovery claim. Others who deserve it may be dealt in on the ground floor. Not Sir Thorncliffe Buckley; he'll take his chances in the general stampede that follows. If he does try to cut in, I'll see to it—at least I'll bet my stack on it—that he's counted out entirely."

"How?" "By calling it a day as far as Atherton is concerned. By attacking it from the Yukon side from Carcross."

McBain shook his head. "You underestimate his resources, I'm afraid. His influence includes Carcross, Atherton, Edmonton—every

base from which the Liard can be reached by air. No, Mr. Stewart." He likewise rose and leaned on the desk; he lowered his voice: "In a game of this magnitude—and I'm suggesting nothing new to you when I say that there are stakes involved other than the gold itself—I advise you to proceed with caution. There is a single word that should govern your actions at all times, no matter what your private opinions or prejudices. It is called 'expediency.' Do I make myself plain?"

"Yes, thanks. We'll see what develops," Court stood erect. "And now, where's McGinn? Do you happen to know?"

"I do. He's in gaol."

"So?" Court was not surprised. "On what charge?"

"Drunk and disorderly. Unfortunately, he's an old offender. It's quite possible he'll stay there for a long time."

His implication was plain; Court nodded. "Unless the proper influence is brought to bear? More tribute to Caesar, eh?"

"An apt figure of speech," the lieutenant approved. For the first time, he smiled; it was like a touch of sunlight on cold, remote peaks. "At least—for your own good, Stewart—remember this: Hereabouts, as you'll probably insist on discovering, all roads lead to Rome."

"We'll see," said Court, genially. "Who knows? Maybe there's a side trail. Hannibal found one, you know."

Please turn to Page 34

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The first call the Duke paid on his arrival in England last week was to his mother, Queen Mary. It is nearly three years since the Duke, then King Edward

VIII, abdicated his throne. Shortly after his marriage the Duke, accompanied by the Duchess, made a 13-day tour of Germany, and visited Hitler at Berchtesgaden. Later, the Windsors planned to visit America, but this projected tour was abandoned.

In May, during a tour of the 1914-18 battlefields in France, the Duke, speaking "wholly for myself and simply as a soldier of the last war," broadcast a peace appeal to the world. This picture shows His Majesty King George VI (then Duke of York) and his brother, the Duke of Windsor (then Prince of Wales and Heir to the British Throne) in British uniform.



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CUTEX

Nail Polish



Wings North

Continued from Page 32

"TRUE. But as a student of history you'll recall as a significant fact: He never captured Rome."

McBain followed Court into the outer office. The civilian in the bearskin coat was close at hand, leaning on a counter beside the wicket. He stood erect as Court passed through; McBain said, remaining inside the enclosure: "One moment, Mr. Stewart. This is Mr. Ravenhill."

"Delighted," Ravenhill's accent was clipped and British. He inclined his head stiffly, but did not offer his hand. He drew his coat together, his bitter, somewhat mocking eyes fixed on McBain.

"Of Arctic Airways," the latter added.

"From Edmonton?" Court looked at Ravenhill more closely. "You flew the ship over—the OA-17?"

"Right."

"How is the old bus? What shape's she in?"

"Fit," Ravenhill gestured towards the door. "Shall we barge along to the hotel? More congenial place to talk shop, y'know." He did not wait for an answer, but led the way. He said over his shoulder to McBain: "Cheerio, old carrion."

In the outside cold, their collars upturned against the quivering wind, they appraised each other narrowly. The Englishman's aloofness had vanished the instant they were alone; laughter wrinkles grouped about his mirthless eyes. It was plain that the man had a singularly engaging personality when he chose to exert its charm.

Court said cautiously: "What's up, Ravenhill? Has something developed with respect to the ship?"

"Plenty, old chap. You haven't read your wire from Edmonton yet, I take it? Read it and weep, as you jolly Americans say. Then we'll delve into the foul plot. You know,

Stewart, I think I'm going to enjoy this blighted business. Bucketful of the filthy involved. Villains lurking in the bushes."

He stifled a yawn with slender, gloved fingers. "Yes, even a beautiful lady with her finger in the pie."

"A lady?" Court adopted, with relief, the other's light facetiousness of manner. "How beautiful?"

"Divine. But you've met her, of course. I refer to Miss Dorothy Canby, of Montreal, Cleveland, the Riviera, and way points. An American, like yourself. And the niece of the Dominion's most respected cut-throat."

"So?" Court hid the real impact of this news. It touched him deeper than he had dreamed it could ever again. "Dolly here—at Atherton? That's incredible. Yes, I met her here last summer, and again in Washington a month ago, at the Embassy brawl—excuse it, ball—but she told me definitely that she was leaving for a cruise on somebody or other's yacht."

"Well, she's there, old chap. At the hotel. Waiting for you."

"For me?"

"No less. Hasn't it occurred to you yet, my dear Stewart, that you're far and away the most interesting person in these parts at the moment? Consider, for example, how closely you've been chaperoned since you arrived. First, by that long-jawed old beagle, McBain. Next by your humble servant. I, in turn, must deliver you to Miss Canby, the moment I confirm your wire from Edmonton. And she, no doubt, will contrive to lead you directly to the presence of the caliph himself. Meanwhile, if you're permitted to see this gorilla what's-his-name—McSweeney—McDuff—"

"McGinn?"

"McGinn it is. Even then, in the short trip between the hotel and the gaol, I've no doubt you'll be furnished with a guide. Of course, Miss Canby's presence here may be the purest coincidence. Ought I to know?"

Court looked hard at him. "How much do you know, Ravenhill?"

"More than is good for me, I suspect, careless as my reputation is in matters of health. More than McBain, let us say. About on a par with Miss Canby. Slightly less than Sir Thorncliffe."

"More than I do?" Court's grin was shamefaced. "That wouldn't be much, I'm beginning to suspect."

"A properly humble spirit," Ravenhill approved, ironically. "Becoming, no end. As a matter of fact, Stewart, the clever minds of this vicinity—and some of them are really clever, y'know—are all in a sweat over certain vital information that you possess. That you and McGinn possess, I should say, perhaps?"

It was a question within a question, Court saw. It was also the most revealing thing that had been said or asked thus far—a final hint of the formidable mass of information that had been compiled in advance of his arrival.

And he saw, now, that his very hesitancy had provided a sufficient answer to the polished, mercurial, super-intelligent renegade at his side.

Ravenhill said, his bleak voice tinged with something that might have verged on kindness: "S all right, old topper. As long as you and McGinn can guard your information, you've got the jolly old whip hand." He yawned again, his spiked moustache bristling. "The wind's a bit brisk, what? Excellent flying weather, though."

Had it not been for Ravenhill's warning—and he thanked his stars for whatever loquacious impulse had prompted it—Court knew that he could not have passed off the encounter with Dolly Canby so easily. Old wounds still rankled; off guard, he might have revealed how deep and unhealed were the scars left from their last encounter.

As it was, he was able to adopt a careless and casual front, a good-natured politeness verging so he hoped on downright indifference.

"Well, Court!" She emerged from a laughing group just inside and to the right of the crowded lobby; a graceful figure even in the engulfing folds of a ski costume. Court had often wondered why women wore such outfits. "Don't faint or anything. Just guess who."

"Hi, Dolly. How are you?" He made an elaborate business of drawing off his heavy glove before grasping her extended hand. "This is a pleasure. Ravenhill told me you were here."

"I can see that—drat him." She wrinkled her nose at Ravenhill, who blinked apologetically. "There goes another big moment, flat on its foolish face. At least, you were surprised, weren't you? I don't mean thrilled—I couldn't expect too much."

"Flabbergasted, even. Weren't you heading for the Azores or somewhere, the last time I saw you?"

She nodded. "We're salvaging something out of the wreck—you remember seeing me the last time. Think hard now. Where was it? In what circumstances?"

He pondered this, frowning. "In Washington? Yes, at a dance. You're the girl who went out of her way to tell me, deliberately and gratuitously, that I was a waster, a tramp, a primitive lad who had no right even to breathe the same air in which stuffed shirts move. Particularly the rarefied atmosphere surrounding the daughter of a railroad baron who was also the niece of Sir Thorncliffe Buckley. Something like that, wasn't it?"

"Don't be stuffy," she admonished. "Don't pretend you didn't hold your own in that wrist-slapping contest."

"I did not. I went away from there talking to myself. With tufts sprouting on my ears."

"Well, you picked on me, you big hulk. You called me names. Let's see if I can recall those fighting words. Yes," She held up four fingers and checked them off. "A moth, and a particularly insane kind of moth—one that didn't even have ambition enough to spin its own cocoon. A social parasite—useless, beautiful, and dumb. If intellect were clothes, I'd be a Lady Godiva, somewhat popeyed."

"Don't improvise," Court admonished primly. "That Lady Godiva business."

"You did. I'm not improvising. But this was the worst of all. Quote: 'Line up three hundred women on a desert island—'"

"No, no. In a snowstorm."

"—real women, dependable, of the kind a man could tie to in a pinch, and you'd be at the end of the line. Powdering your nose? End of quote. So what do you mean—"

Ravenhill coughed discreetly, his understanding glance encompassing them both. "I'll see you at the desk, Stewart."

"Don't go, Riv," she said, hastily, her hand on his arm. "Stand by. We're not fighting. It's just our quaint little way of hinting at how really thrilled we are to see each other again. You know—reliving the beloved past. Eh, Court?"

"Sure. Give us a couple of splitting axes and we could show some real affection." Court glanced apologetically at his watch. "It's been fine to run across you again, Dolly. I'll be seeing you around."

"Doesn't it interest you at all to know that I'm here partly on your account? That cruise seemed ally after that night. I felt useless, futile. So when Thorny—Sir Thorncliffe Buckley to you—invited me up here for a fortnight, I burned up the wires accepting. I knew you'd be back."

"And just how?" said Court, looking hard at her.

Please turn to Page 36

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NAPOLEON'S LIFE as RADIO SERIAL

Dramatic new 2GB feature
has wide appeal

Napoleon Bonaparte is the central figure in a dramatic new radio serial being broadcast by 2GB.

Tracing the life of the Emperor from the period of his early successes until his final banishment to the island of St. Helena, it portrays realistically many historic incidents of his amazing career.

HIGHLIGHTS of the production, which will consist of 52 episodes, are the stories of Napoleon's three great loves—Josephine, Marie Louise and Marie Walewska.

Written after a close study of hundreds of books on Napoleon and official records, the serial reveals, as it unfolds, that Napoleon, unlike some of his modern imitators, was a man with progressive ideas and great breadth of vision.

The outbreak of war has caused no slackening in 2GB's activities. In the last few weeks more new programmes have been put on the air than at any time in the station's history.

One of the most popular new sessions is "English Jackpots," an extension of the "Spelling Jackpots" idea which was so popular with listeners.

Tests in grammar include quotations, uses of adjectives, adverbs, pronouns . . . in fact, everything that we learn, or are supposed to learn, at school.

This session is conducted on Tuesdays at 9.30 p.m. by Mr. John Dease.

Geography test

THERE are now five 2GB "Jackpots" sessions, the others being musical, mathematical, general knowledge, and tongue-twister contests.

The general knowledge session, known as "That's What You Think!" is among the most popular. It has particular interest for listeners who think they have a good general knowledge of Australia.

Examination of many of the question-lists provided for this game shows that there are plenty of pitfalls in our local geography.

For instance, few people would believe, at first thought, that Charleville, deep in the Queensland interior, was east of Cairns, a northern coastal town. Yet it's so.

Where is Australia's biggest freshwater lake? Strangely enough, it's in little Tasmania. Most people would believe the island to be far too small to accommodate the continent's biggest stretch of fresh water.

Known as the Great Lake, it is so wide in places that it is quite impossible to see the other side. In a severe storm, waves that form on the lake are like those encountered at sea.

Incidentally, it is the source of most of Tasmania's hydro-electric power.

There are dozens of other little-known facts that provide posers for listeners and those invited to the studio.

Here is one: What fruit do most people eat in its entirety—including skin, pips and core? And the rosy tomato provides the answer. The truth lies in the fact, of course, that most people do not think of the tomato as a fruit.

And here is a question for those of us who imagine we know something of the Empire's flag.

How many stripes are there on the Union Jack?

Examination of a diagram of the flag's construction will show that there are none.

It is composed of the three crosses of St. George, St. Patrick, and St. Andrew superimposed on a blue ground.

Lastly, here's one for Australian backwoodsmen:

If a rabbit fell into a creek, could it swim? In truth, it could, and does—an accomplishment which may account for the mass migrations of rabbits in Australia, much to the discomfort of pastoralists.

Even these few examples of the type of questions in "That's What You Think!" which is broadcast at 9.30 p.m. on Saturdays, show that there are some things that the most highly-educated person may not know.

Mr. Ellis Price has built up another new session of stories and sketches which is bound to have a wide appeal.

This feature, named "Chasing Your Troubles Away, with Ellis Price," will be broadcast on Wednesdays at 9.15 p.m.

Another important feature newly introduced is "Reflections in a Wineglass."

It has often been complained that complete ballet music recitals are heard too seldom over the air.

"Reflections in a Wineglass" aims at the presentation of a complete ballet score each week, supplemented by an interesting talk on philosophy.

Nancy Bird's Aviation Exhibition



MISS NANCY BIRD, famous Australian airwoman, begins her "Wings Over the World" exhibition in Sydney next week.

On her recent world tour her personal collection of maps, model aeroplanes, and pictures showing international civil aviation development grew so large that she decided to show it in Australia to stimulate passenger-flying.

Avoiding highly technical terms, Miss Bird will lecture daily on the marvellous network of international aviation.

While her exhibition deals solely with civil flying, Miss Bird has offered her services to the Government for war work if wanted.



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"BECAUSE that's your country, up yonder." She inclined her head towards the north. "Your father's buried there. You both love it and hate it. I wanted to prove to you—perhaps to myself—that I fitted in somewhere. In some corner."

"And you're demonstrating it by defying the elements in Buckley's cabin." Court nodded. "Steam-heated, isn't it, in all of its twenty-odd rooms? A primitive hovel. Did you ever stop to think what would happen to you if you were separated from it by one hundred yards of deep snow?"

"Court!" "Oh, well," he said. "I'll take the curse off that, Dolly. I'm also here partly on account of what you said to me that night. Funny how little things change lives and destinies, eh?"

She laughed. "That's better—though I'm not so little. What did I say that changed your destiny?" Her pretended eagerness was tinged with doubt.

"I mean this," Court still spoke banteringly, but with an under-

current of feeling as real as her own. "You've lived all your life hip deep—"

"Really!" "—in shekels. You gave me to understand that night that one of the essentials I lacked—the most important of a dozen or more, I gathered—was the fact that I didn't have it in barrels. So when this business developed, I went for it. It's no secret now, I think—he glanced keenly at Ravenhill—"that the Swiftwater strike has been located again. It's a jackpot worth nobody knows how much. So I said to myself, 'Aha, m'lady, if it takes millions to gain face in your regal, if not altogether unselfish, point of view—'"

"That's the way it goes," she interposed sadly. "Say some little thing in the heat of anger, when you're mad enough to bite nails, and right away it's a death-only-can-square-it insult. I didn't mean—"

"S all right," said Court. "I didn't mean all I said either. Maybe you

Wings North

Continued from Page 34

could make it through a hundred yards of deep snow."

"Listen, Court." In a swift change of mood, she laid a laughing mask aside; she was simple, direct, unaffected. "Let's let bygones be bygones. What do you say?"

"Suits me." He meant it; he had never seen her in a more attractive role. "And what now?"

"Come on up to the shack. Thorny said I could invite you. In fact, I think he's looking forward to meeting you."

"You think so?"

"Sorry. I know he wants to talk to you. Yes, I know all about it. Court. You'll have to see him sooner or later."

He shook his head; he could feel himself congealing inside. She had sounded sincere. "Sorry, Dolly. Thanks. I don't think I can. Business, you know. For instance, there's been a wire waiting for me here ever since I hit town."

HE gestured towards the desk. "I've been fighting my way towards it, inch by inch."

"I don't want to stand in your way, of course. But you've got to come after your immediate business is finished. I promised Thorny. You can't let me down. Look, Court. It's only four-thirty. I'll be around until six. Maybe you'll find, by that time—"

She broke off, glancing at Ravenhill. "At least, meet me here. Won't you?"

"All right. I'll see you at least." The desk clerk, remembering Court from the previous summer, was professionally effusive. Yes, there was a wire waiting.

Court opened the telegram. It was from Arctic Airways, at Edmonton. The contents did not surprise him; it was the wording that added fuel to inner fires. "Regret exceedingly that exercise of a previous option prevents delivery to you of cabin plane CA-17 per our tentative agreement thorough checking of territory reveals no other suitable ship available for charter in regard CA-17 suggest you see Sir Thorncliffe Buckley or his agent J. H. L. Ravenhill."

"Arctic Airways Ltd." The last line was illuminating. Court folded the telegram and looked at Ravenhill accusingly. That the Englishman was also on the other side of the fence was, singularly enough, a blow. Against his better judgment, he had warned to the man.

"You posed as an Arctic Airways pilot, Ravenhill. On their pay roll. Do you call that cricket?"

"There are no rules to this game," returned Ravenhill, with a touch of impatience. "You're several degrees of latitude removed from fair play, ethics and all that rot, y'know." He indicated a door beyond the desk, labelled CLUB ROOM — FOR GUESTS ONLY. "Before you register, shall we discuss the wire? Over a spot of Scotch?"

They seated themselves in a secluded corner. When the attendant had deposited his tray and departed, Ravenhill mixed the drinks. "Dieu et mon droit," he murmured, raising his brimming glass. "May the best man win."

"Down the hatch," returned Court gloomily. "Ravenhill, let's make this short and sweet. I want to see McGinn—maybe that's all the business left for me to do. You're Buckley's man, so there isn't much to discuss. I'm curious, though. Where's the ship?"

"At Skyline Lake. At the Buckley moorage."

"On skis, I suppose," said Court, ready to take off at an hour's notice.

"Less than that," said Ravenhill. "Look, old chap. The time's come for you and me to call spades spades. I don't ask you to trust me. I don't want you to. I'm a free lance. Ravenhill knows no other god than Ravenhill. Is that clear?"

Court nodded. "Proceed from there."

Animal Antics



MOVIE DIRECTOR: That's right, Miss La Tush! You embrace magnificently, but do it more gently—say about one turn less.

"Good. Tell me this, please: How valuable—vital—is the information that you and McGinn are presumed to possess?"

"You mean, in regard to the strike?"

"And a related fact: The death, ten years ago at Atlin, of James Gordon Courtenay Stewart Maxwell Stewart—known hereabouts by the scarcely less honored title of Swiftwater Stewart."

Court spoke slowly: "Concerning my father's death, neither McGinn nor I know more than the official record. We have a hunch, of course. But hunches are cheap."

"Nevertheless it's true that clearing up the mystery of your father's death, and bringing the cut-throat to time who was responsible for it, is the reason—as important to you as the strike itself—that brought you here?"

"I'll go further than that, Ravenhill. I've spent ten years preparing for it. Getting my technical training. Laying up hours in the air. Saving a little capital. I'm betting it all, such as it is."

Ravenhill nodded. "Do you care to state the nature of your hunch?"

"No. Why should I?"

"Quite. But you'll admit this much, I hope: There's a possibility that your father, when he staked the discovery claim he never lived to record, may have left some information—on the ground—that would point to the man who later double-crossed and killed him?"

"I admit nothing," Court hid the impact of this direct bull's-eye. "But what makes you think so?"

To be continued

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The Movie World

September 23, 1939

The Australian Women's Weekly Special Film Supplement

First Page

GRETA GARBO... becomes human

By JOAN
McLEOD
in
Hollywood



The new Garbo—happy, carefree—enjoying a joke with Melvyn Douglas, her co-star, between scenes in the filming of "Ninotschka."

Friendly, light-hearted on set of "Ninotschka"

SINCE beginning work on "Ninotschka," Hollywood's mystery woman has revealed herself as a singularly human person—gracious, light-hearted, gay.

She arrived for the first day's "shooting" on "Ninotschka," her first film in two years, clad in a pair of jaunty blue beach pyjamas.

She soon revealed her new mood—to fellow-workers, hanging back, slightly overawed—by shouting a friendly greeting to Ernst Lubitsch, directing the film.

She further startled them by vaulting over a studio fence. The "old" Garbo would have waited for the gate to be opened, and passed through with dignity.

Director Lubitsch hasn't arrived at the point of using her Christian name—an old

GARBO ENJOYING COMEDY FLING IN HER FIRST FILM FOR TWO YEARS

Hollywood custom—but he does enjoy—and gets away with—a wisecrack at her expense. So does co-star Melvyn Douglas.

And fellow-workers flock around her between scenes while she "reads" their palms and tells their fortunes.

"Ninotschka" is Garbo's second screen appearance with Melvyn Douglas. Their first was in "As You Desire Me."

She plays an unsophisticated Russian girl on a visit to Paris.

Contact with Western civilisation and falling in love with Douglas in the story

transform her into a woman of the world.

And for the first time in many a day Garbo dons dashing modern fashions—created by MGM fashion artist Adrian.

For MGM have decided to give her more "romantic" roles. She was to have made the biography of Madame Curie as her next film, but the studio shelved it as not "attractive" enough.

Garbo has bought a magnificent home in Beverly Hills, which indicates she is in Hollywood to stay.

In the meantime, in keeping with her new light-hearted mood, she is planning a holiday to Hawaii when she completes "Ninotschka"—where once she would have retired in solitary splendor and behind dark glasses to some little-known resort where nobody could find her.



● Studio portrait of Garbo, as she will appear in "Ninotschka," in which she has her first sophisticated light comedy role.

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● Nonchalant Cary Grant, born in England, made famous by Hollywood, and a charmer of both life and screen.



● Phyllis Brooks, blonde American beauty of stage and screen, to whom Cary has permanently lost his heart—as this story tells.

HE MARRIED VIRGINIA, BUT HE FOLLOWED PHYLLIS TO EUROPE

By JOHN B. DAVIES from Hollywood

HOLLYWOOD'S most eligible bachelor, Cary Grant, has finally surrendered his independence.

He is so much in love with Phyllis Brooks that he followed her to England only three months ago—in spite of their protestations that they were "only good friends."

Their reunion took place under blue Italian skies. They were both house-guests of the Countess di Frasso at her Roman villa.

Friends hoped that their wedding would actually take place at the villa. But an unromantic studio recalled Cary from Europe.

It is a romance which has amused and diverted the colony for the last 18 months. Tall, dark and handsome Grant and tall, fair and lovely Phyllis have been Hollywood's most devoted couple—in spite of the wild pranks they play upon each other.

You have seen them everywhere together—sprawled on the beach at Malibu, eating hot dogs; dressed up fashionably at the Trocadero, doing a rumba—and all the time laughing at the idea that anyone could take them "seriously."

Cary Grant, the most elusive bachelor of them all, makes no secret of his devotion.

And a funny thing about Mr. Grant—Phyllis is exactly the same blonde, decorative type as his first wife, Virginia Cherrill (now the Countess of Jersey).

Cary met Virginia at a party given by Marion Davies.

As soon as his eyes beheld the blonde vision of loveliness, all his theories about the glories of bachelorhood evaporated into thin air. They fell madly in love, and were soon wed. And for two glorious, hectic years they were Hollywood's most romantic, glamorous and handsome couple.

Strangely enough, Cary found that he wanted from marriage what had always seemed to him slightly silly. It was his idea to come home after a day at the studio and spend a quiet evening enjoying his beautiful home, the cosy fireplace, and the companionship of his lovely wife.



● A smiling Virginia Cherrill and Cary Grant, taken during their engagement.

Marriage did not change Virginia in the same way. Although she was never really a movie star, off-screen she was startlingly beautiful, and was the most admired woman in Hollywood. She loved parties, dressing and preening. When they were finally divorced, Virginia claimed that Cary was unreasonably jealous.

Now Phyllis loves parties—but only when Cary wants to go to them. She talks always in terms of "we," not "I," and she has the same prankish kind of humor as Mr. Grant.

The fact that Cary to-day is at the top of the movie tree carries

very little weight with her. The blonde Phyllis does not go in for ostentatious display of his devotion. But she is certainly a very lucky young woman—as Cary is a very wealthy young man.

He gets \$31,250 for every movie he films, and there is no producer who can't find a story suitable for the tall, dark and handsome Mr. Grant.

You would never suspect that handsome, nonchalant Cary once earned his living as a still-walker at ten shillings a day. Nor would you imagine that the debonair young man, who is so completely at ease in the most elegant environment, made his debut in America as an acrobat with a vaudeville troupe.

But he lost his job soon after the show opened in New York. One night, on the stage of the Hippodrome, one foot strap broke loose, and Cary dived headlong through the group of chorus girls and on to his nose. No girls were hurt, but Cary broke his leg.

Was still-walker

WHEN he was able to walk without a limp he looked for a part in a play, but the casting offices turned him away. When his funds were exhausted, he accepted a job as a still-walker, and became a walking advertisement on the Coney Island boardwalk.

Walking on stilts under a blazing summer sun, with a pain in the leg, is not much fun. One day he fainted, and fourteen feet of Cary hit the dust. That was the end. Cary surrendered. He packed his little bag and went home, sick at heart because he considered himself a failure.

A change of luck came with the change of scene. He had hardly set foot on his native soil than he got what he wanted—a job as an actor! And before long he was getting twenty-five pounds a week.

His first important engagement on Broadway was with Jeanette MacDonald, at that time unknown, in "Boom Boom." They both made a hit.

Hollywood seemed the next logical step. He bought a second-hand

motor and made the 3000-mile trek across the continent.

Up to this point of his career, Archie Leach was still his name, and being a bachelor was his choice. He figured that he was not the type for married life!



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Louis Hayward's lucky day

AFTER WAITING YEARS FOR BOTH,
ENGLISH ACTOR WINS HIS BRIDE
AND HIS IDEAL PICTURE ROLE

From JOAN McLEOD, in Hollywood

Hasty Haywards!

ARRIVING half an hour late for a luncheon engagement, Ida Lupino and Louis Hayward floored their hostess by explaining they'd just stopped off to buy a house.

Seems they were driving through Beverly Hills, when an estate agent pulled up beside them.

"I have a marvellous bargain in a house," he called. "Like to see it?" They had no intention of buying a home, but thought they'd take a look.

And just like that the deal was closed!

A YEAR ago Louis Hayward had just two film-colony claims to fame.

He was extremely charming—in a city of charming men: and he was persistently in love with that pert little beauty, Ida Lupino.

But five months ago Fate suddenly cast an exciting eye upon young Louis.

After two years of changing her mind, Ida finally said "Yes." Louis became a proud bridegroom, and they went off on their honeymoon to New York.

Twelve weeks ago, Fate became still more interested.

Louis was given his first starring role on the screen—in that Alexandre Dumas adventure classic, "The Man in the Iron Mask."

And they say that Louis in this film is just another heart-stirrer like Ronald Colman, Douglas Fairbanks, Jun., and Robert Donat. Which is grand news for young Mr. Hayward, who, beneath that charm, is intensely, doggedly ambitious.

It will be even grander news if "The Man in the Iron Mask" does for Hayward what "The Count of Monte Cristo" did for Robert Donat. And there is an even chance. The same producer, Edward Small, chose both these young men for these very films.

And the proof? Mr. Small has already requested two more films from Louis during the coming year.

They also say that producer Small has brought out the real personality of Hayward—in the same way that he made Donat, already featured in several films, an international figure.

In real life, Hayward possesses a curiously arresting appeal—as several Hollywood lovelies, such as Wendy Barrie, discovered before he fell in love with the elusive Lupino.

That French flair

THAT fascinating dash of French and Italian ancestry may have something to do with it. His determination comes, of course, from his Anglo-Saxon heritage, which drove him from South Africa to Wales and London in quest of theatrical fame.

The famous Noel Coward actually "discovered" him.

Louis made his debut on the West End stage in, of all things, that old spine-freezer, "Dracula." Then he got a part in a Gerald du Maurier play.

Coward saw his performance, and sent a note to him: "If ever you need a stage job, come and see me."

So very shortly afterwards Hayward was the lead in a revival of Coward's play, "Hay Fever." Then came New York, in another Coward play, "Point Valaine"; and then Hollywood, which gave him work without fame—until the appearance of producer Edward Small.

It looks as if his role in "The Man in the Iron Mask" is the finest wedding present that a young actor ever had—and the proudest wife in Hollywood to-day is Ida Lupino Hayward.

• Below, a brunette Joan Bennett with Hayward in "The Man in the Iron Mask."

Times have changed Plots begin at altar

MARRIED COUPLES
TAKE LIMELIGHT

THE boy-meets-girl theme would appear to be finished in Hollywood. Ending a picture at the altar, after recounting the vicissitudes of courtship, is strictly *passé* in your modern movie.

The idea nowadays seems to be boy-gets-girl, and the story goes on from there.

Most stories must deal basically with a man and a woman. So what could be better than to start with the wedding and tell the story of what happens afterwards? Anyway, that is the way film writers work these days.

Crosby weds Louise

PICTURES dealing with married life, or at least with couples who are married, have been too numerous of late to mention. Even Bing Crosby is falling for the spell of movie matrimony.

For some years he has been pursuing the lovely maiden right up to the last reel. Now for the first time he gets married in the very first reel. This is to Louise Campbell in their new Paramount opus, "The Star Maker." It is not a story of married life, but the two appear together throughout the picture.

Irene Dunne and Fred MacMurray are in a first-reel marriage in "Invitation to Happiness."

In "Gone with the Wind," Clark Gable and Vivien Leigh are married for half the length of the story.

And look at Bulldog Drummond, apparently the perennial bachelor of moviedom. He finally got married recently in "Bulldog Drum-



• Louis Hayward, in centre, as himself; and, at top, as the dashing Dumas hero.

mond's Bride," and John Howard, who portrays the title role, starts work soon in "Bulldog Drummond's Wife."

Another phase of this trend is the sudden rise in popularity of the family life series of movies—the Hardy family, the Jones family, the domestic comedies of Charlie Ruggles and Mary Boland.

The newest of these down-to-earth home folks are Fay Bainter and Frank Craven, who will soon be seen as a married couple in "Our Neighbors—the Carters."





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1 **STANLEY** (Tracy) is ordered to Africa by Henry Hull to look for Livingstone.



2 **IN ZANZIBAR**, Richard Greene, Henry Travers and Nancy Kelly try to dissuade him.



3 **BUT STANLEY** continues his search, with Walter Brennan and his native safari.



4 **STANLEY**, after many hardships, at last finds Livingstone (Sir Cedric Hardwicke).



5 **LIVINGSTONE**, deciding to remain, hands Stanley papers to take back to civilisation.



6 **IN LONDON**, Greene aids Stanley in proving that these documents are genuine.

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20th Century Fox Star

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	Complexion	EYES	HAIR	SKIN
NAME	Very Light <input type="checkbox"/>	Blue <input type="checkbox"/>	BLONDE <input type="checkbox"/>	Dry <input type="checkbox"/>
	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Grey <input type="checkbox"/>	Light <input type="checkbox"/>	Oily <input type="checkbox"/>
ADDRESS	Creamy <input type="checkbox"/>	Green <input type="checkbox"/>	BROWNETTE <input type="checkbox"/>	Normal <input type="checkbox"/>
	Ruddy <input type="checkbox"/>	Hazel <input type="checkbox"/>	Light <input type="checkbox"/>	
CITY	Medium <input type="checkbox"/>	Brown <input type="checkbox"/>	BRUNETTE <input type="checkbox"/>	LIPS
	Sallow <input type="checkbox"/>	Black <input type="checkbox"/>	Light <input type="checkbox"/>	Moist <input type="checkbox"/>
STATE	Freckled <input type="checkbox"/>	LASHES	REDHEAD <input type="checkbox"/>	Dry <input type="checkbox"/>
	Olive <input type="checkbox"/>	Light <input type="checkbox"/>	Light <input type="checkbox"/>	AGE
		Dark <input type="checkbox"/>	Dark <input type="checkbox"/>	

TRACY as famous explorer

STUDIO SENT EXPEDITION TO AFRICA FOR FILMING OF "STANLEY AND LIVINGSTONE"

"STANLEY and Livingstone," Fox's most ambitious venture into the realms of historical drama, took three years to make.

The studio spent £550,000 on production, and sent a special expedition into the heart of Africa, led by famous explorer Mrs. Osa Johnson, to photograph its adventure sequences.

The film is the story of American journalist Stanley's heroic journey through Africa in 1871, in search of English missionary Dr. Livingstone, lost to civilisation for four years.

It shows the historic meeting between the two explorers, and Stanley's return, alone, to tell a disbelieving world of his success, and to be branded "the most colossal liar of his age."

Spencer Tracy takes the role of the intrepid journalist, Stanley, with Sir Cedric Hardwicke, English actor, as Livingstone, and Henry Hull as James Gordon Bennett, publisher of the "New York Herald," who sent Stanley on his assignment.

Research for film

PRODUCER Darryl Zanuck sent Captain Lloyd Norris, formerly of the British Intelligence Service, on a 25,000-mile trip through Europe and Africa in 1938 to do research for the film.

In 1937 Zanuck signed Mrs. Johnson on to make her historic trip through the wild Tanganyika country.

She led a party of twenty-seven Hollywood players and technicians

along the route that Stanley took on his nine-months' trek to find Livingstone.

En route Director Otto Brower stopped to film the historic incidents in the places where they had occurred—seventy years ago.

On the same spots where Stanley and his party were attacked by savages and threatened by grass fires, where his men mutinied and tried to kill him, Director Brower staged the same incidents.

Costly expedition

THREE thousand natives from the Masai, Kikuyu and Wicoma tribes, savages then, but now friendly towards the white man, took part in the film.

The whole expedition cost Fox £100,000—sixteen times as much as Stanley's trip cost the "New York Herald."

Fox endeavored to make their drama as true to fact as possible.

They were aided in their efforts by Spencer Tracy.

The actor insisted on being allowed to "grow old" in the film, although the studio was at first against the idea.

He also suggested several deletions and additions to the scenario, which Fox agreed were an improvement.

Six versions of the story were written before the final script was approved by both Tracy and the studio.

Richard Greene and Nancy Kelly play fictional characters introduced to provide romantic interest in the film.

SCREEN ODDITIES

By CHARLES BRUNO



ACTORS PORTRAYING SAILORS OF 1840 IN "RULER OF THE SEAS" WERE ISSUED A DAILY RATION—NOT OF GROC—BUT CORN SYRUP TO PREVENT SEASICKNESS.

A PORTRAIT PRESENTED BY MYRNA LOY FOR HER PASSPORT WAS REJECTED—SHE HAD WORN STUDIO MAKE-UP AND UNCLE SAM INSISTED THE PICTURE REVEAL HER NUMEROUS FRECKLES.

16TH CENTURY COSTUMES WORN BY ERROL FLYNN IN "ELIZABETH AND ESSEX" ARE ULTRA-MODERN—EVEN THE HIGH BOOTS ARE EQUIPPED WITH ZIPPERS.

Here's hot news from all studios!

From JOHN B. DAVIES, New York; BARBARA BOURCHIER, Hollywood; and JUDY BAILEY, London

JIMMY CAGNEY, who made a successful comeback after his "retirement" during a lengthy battle with Warners, has agreed to sign another long-term contract with Warners, this time for seven years, when his present agreement expires in October.

DOUG FAIRBANKS' next picture will be "Safari," romantic modern drama in which he will co-star with lovely Madeleine Carroll.

BORIS KARLOFF is a new and very proud father to little Sara Jane, born on his own fifty-first birthday. Karloff is at present working on Universal's new "shocker," "Son of Frankenstein." He, of course, is the monster.

DAVID NIVEN has been learning conjuring for his role as a magician in "Eternally Yours."

MGM has bought for the screen the collection of Noel Coward one-act plays, presented on the stage under the title, "To-night at 8.30."

AFTER eighteen years of marriage, Roland Young is getting his divorce from Marjorie Kummer, the daughter of the well-known playwright, Clare Kummer.

DEANNA DURBIN receives her first screen kiss in her new picture, "First Love." The lucky young man is Robert Black.

Robert is twenty years old and a member of a Los Angeles society family. He got into films via amateur theatricals.

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PRIVATE VIEWS

By The Australian Women's Weekly Film Reviewer

★★ YOUNG MR. LINCOLN

(Week's Best Release)

Henry Fonda, Alice Brady. (Twentieth Century-Fox.)

HERE is a lovable, humorous and shrewd study of Abraham Lincoln in his youth.

It is a personal triumph for that shy young man, Henry Fonda, who shows the whole character of Lincoln with sympathy as well as with skill.

In spite of its being purely American in history, you will enjoy this picture all the way through. For it is tremendously appealing.

Set in the country, among a homely, boisterous and simple people, the theme is simple, too. It just takes "Abe" Lincoln from his store-keeper days to his very first trial as a lawyer in a small Illinois town.

The trial is the highlight of the picture. For "Young Mr. Lincoln" defends two country boys, on trial for stabbing a man. Their mother, beautifully and touchingly played by Alice Brady, knows which boy held the knife. But she will not tell.

Is "Young Mr. Lincoln" successful? He is. And the picture ends there, on the threshold of his public career.—Embassy; showing.

★★ GOOD GIRLS GO TO PARIS

Joan Blondell, Melvyn Douglas. (Columbia.)

A LIGHT, frothy piece of fun this, with a touch of tender romance underneath its laughter. You will not remember it vividly afterwards—but find it amusing at the time.

Joan Blondell is a waitress in a University restaurant, and Melvyn Douglas is the visiting professor to whom Joan confides her guileless schemes.

Joan wants to go to Paris, and thinks blackmail would be an easy way of raising money. A shocked Mr. Douglas convinces her of the naughtiness of this plan.

But imagine Mr. Douglas' surprise and alarm when, after farewelling Joan to her Minnesota home, he finds her ensconced at the breakfast-table of a wealthy New York family. And, what is more, the family is that of the beautiful debutante to whom he is engaged.

The plot gets thicker and thicker. Joan gets five proposals, and Melvyn Douglas nearly gets a nervous breakdown. But the film does get to a happy ending—and Joan gets her man.

You will find Melvyn Douglas full of charm in his bewildered role, and Joan an adept comedienne—with a lighter touch than usual. Walter Connolly, as the irascible head of the wealthy family, is grand. Plaza; showing.

★ NO PLACE TO GO

Dennis Morgan, Gloria Dickson. (Warners.)

ONE of those simple, sentimental and tiresome tales about a whimsical old character who becomes popular after great odds.

Old Fred Stone overplays the role of "Grandpa" until he becomes embarrassing. He is a happy inmate of an Old Soldiers' Home. But his married son feels guilty about him, and persuades him to come and live with himself and his wife.

Old Fred upsets the household, interferes in the kitchen, and is unhappy. He would rather be in another old men's home, among a set of new friends.

But before he gets his wish he also has to make friends with a boy bootblack (Tommy Bupp), and show off his wrestling prowess with a couple of thugs.

Every now and then the Hollywood screen tosses off these saccharine domestic fairy tales—and they become harder and harder to take.—Embassy; showing.

★ RENEGADE TRAIL

William Boyd, Charlotte Wynters. (Paramount.)

LESS action and more sentiment for gallant Hopalong Cassidy make this Western fall slightly below the standard set by the usually swift-moving films of this series.

In fact, the whole adventure with which Hoppy is engaged strikes one as somewhat tame.

Too much space is devoted to verbal praise for "Hoppy" as the benefactor

Our Film Gradings

★★★ Excellent
★★ Above average
★ Average

No stars — below average.

of the helpless. And there is too much byplay with small hero-worshipping Tommy Bupp and his attractive mother, the Widow Joyce (Charlotte Wynters).

In fact, Cassidy becomes rather seriously involved—romantically speaking—in rescuing Charlotte's cattle from rustlers, headed by her unscrupulous husband, escaped gaol-bird.

Best part of the film is the glorious scenic background of prairies and rugged, rocky mountainside. This compensates in some measure for the lack of action.—Cameo and Haymarket-Civic; showing.

★ THE GRACIE ALLEN MURDER CASE

Gracie Allen, Warren William. (Paramount.)

YES, it's Gracie Allen again, in her maddest, most loquacious mood, running wild in an S.S. van Dyne murder mystery, and providing some moments of tedium, but far more joyous ones.

Actually the jokes she cracks are not frightfully witty. But she's so darned silly you'll just have to laugh. One mad moment for an example: Gazing at a picture of herself, she says: "Now where have I seen that face before?"

Despite Gracie's presence, there is a serious attempt to make exciting the murder of an escaped criminal and the subsequent investigations of the police and Philo Vance, who is acting independently for chief suspect, Kent Taylor. And there are quite a few thrilling moments, although the plot will not bear too close an inspection.

Warren William is completely at ease as Philo—Pido to Gracie—and manages her with consummate patience.

And Kent Taylor and Ellen Drew charmingly engage in romance on the sidelines.—Cameo and Haymarket-Civic; showing.

Shows Still Running

★★★ Goodbye Mr. Chips. Robert Donat, Greer Garson in really great picture. St. James, 8th week.

★★ Wuthering Heights. Laurence Olivier, Merle Oberon in magnificent and faithful version of Emily Brontë's love story. Century, 2nd week.

★★ Jamaica Inn. Charles Laughton, Maureen O'Hara in exciting drama of wreckers and 19th century villainy. Prince Edward, 3rd week.

★★ Only Angels Have Wings. Cary Grant, Jean Arthur in thrilling aviation adventure drama. Regent, 2nd week.

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The Tornado

Continued from Page 6

IT was not from any desire to be gone that she said abruptly, "I rode back alone. I'll have to go on now and ask for a night's lodging at Willmount."

"I'm sorry," he told her then, "but there isn't much of Willmount left and the family went away a month ago. There are two men camped in what remains of the old house. I was baching in the cottage here till it blew away from me."

"Oh. Was that when you built that—that desirable modern residence over there?" She pointed to the eccentric outline of the hut.

"That's right. I built it in rather a hurry, I'm afraid, with the timbers—or rather the corrugated iron—of your house."

"Then the place is really mine, isn't it?"

"That needs considering. Will you let me make you a cup of tea while we talk it over?"

"I have a horse, too," she reminded him.

"I'll attend to him while the kettle boils."

He dismounted and she followed him, picking her way among strange obstacles, to the debatable iron hut. They came inside; and when he had lit a lamp they stood searching each other's eyes for a long time without smile or apology. He was as fair and well featured as Nance herself, but she had yet to learn that because of the habitual mobility of that face, now momentarily intent, its form and expression would never again be so fixed in her mind or so easily called up as during the next few hours.

At last he turned away and took a battered kettle from the makeshift fireplace. It had had a very different appearance when she had seen it last, but still she recognised it. "Mine, I think," she said.

He put it down and held up a saucepan. "Yours, too?"

"The last time I looked at those things I wished I'd never see them again," she told him.

"We are going to be glad of them to-night," he said, and added rather strangely, "We are going to be glad of everything to-night." He set about lighting a fire.

"Can we really decide who owns this mansion?" she asked.

"The furniture and fittings must undoubtedly be yours."

She looked about her in the un-

even light. "Yes; I can recognise most of them, even in their present shape."

"And, of course, the fabric of the place—if one can use such a term—"

"Circumstances point to that being mine as well." They both began to laugh. "Of course," she argued, "it's on Mr. Fisher's land. I think that legally the owner of the land has a claim—"

"But if I remember rightly that does not apply to a portable building."

"Could one call this a portable building?"

"Wait till another gale comes and we'll see!"

He went out to attend to the horses and long before he came back it was quite dark outside. "Listen," he said then, seriously enough. "At any minute it's going to rain again, hard; the river is up; Willmount Creek is running; this end of the party wire is still down; my car was smashed up in the storm; we have only two tired horses within reach; so it is just as well that this should be your house and not mine, because you'll have to stay in it for the night."

"I might still get across the river to Birchs," she suggested. "It can't be so high now, and I know it even in the dark."

"No! Please—for heaven's sake!" he cried at this, so vehemently that she was shocked from the contemplation of it. "I'm sorry," he apologised then, "but it is not to be thought of."

PERHAPS she was just as thankful. "Supposing I did stay," she conceded. "You mean that propriety depends on who owns this noble edifice? Of course, Mr. Fisher—"

"My name's Alan," he interrupted, taking up her own mocking tone again with evident relief. But the name was enlightening. She knew him now as the Fisher's favorite and most-talked-of nephew. A year or more ago he had lost the girl he was going to marry when she had been drowned in a creek near his home in Queensland.

"Don't worry," Nance said. "I won't try to cross the river to-night. Let us continue this interesting argument about the house. You mean that if it were actually yours, you couldn't very properly entertain me in it; but, having decided it's mine, how can I entertain you any more properly? Forgive me if I seem to be quibbling, but these nice distinctions always seem to daze me—"

"Well, when it comes to your entertaining me—that was a point I hadn't considered. It simply occurred to me that if I no longer owned the house—"

"Pardon me, Mr. Fisher, but I can't see how there could ever have been any idea of your owning the house. As the structure undoubtedly belongs to me, and the ground it's standing on belongs to your uncle."

She paused. "Now that is a very important point. We must consider that fully. Wait; it will rain again at any moment; the river is up; the telephone is down; the car is smashed; the horses are tired. . . . It appears to me that your uncle must have a legal claim to this house after all. We will give him the verdict. And in that case, logically, we are the guests of your aunt, both of us. If she neglects to put in an appearance while we are here, the onus is on her—"

She was delighted with the inspired absurdity of her own reasoning and with his reception of it.

It was her own kitchen table from which they presently ate their meal. "There was a leg off when I raked it out of the ruins," he said. "I'm sorry I had to restore it with such unsuitable nails."

He tried to cover up the uneven corner with a chipped plate, but she took it away again. The clumsily mended table had never seemed so desirable before.

"Leave it," she said, when she exposed the nailed wood again. "It doesn't matter. It's nice, somehow." And as if her understanding had touched his own, he looked at her with a sudden surprised pleasure.

At that moment the threatened rain commenced and they heard the wind rising with it.

"Will the roof hold?" she asked.

"With luck. And there's plenty of dry fuel in for the fire."

For the rest of the night they sat together by the spluttering fire, glad of it and glad of each other. They did not feel any painful anxiety about some impending minute when the roof might fall to hold, but were only

What's the Answer?

Test your knowledge on these questions:

1.—Yampi Sound, off the coast of West Australia, is of great value to Australia because

It is ideal for a naval base — it has rich iron deposits — it is an ideal landing place for planes on their way to Africa — its climate is ideal for a health resort.

2.—The Duke of Gloucester has been appointed to an important post in the

Navy — Army — Air Force — A.R.P. Service.

3.—If you went out to tea and there was a "hiatus" in the conversation, there would be

A fierce argument — a pause — two people speaking at once — loud and prolonged laughter.

4.—Can you think of one word which means all four of the following things:

A flower — a basis for soup — a fund — a kind of neckcloth.

5.—A berth is

A flat bonnet worn in the days of Charles II—a Victorian side-board with a cellarette in the middle — a dressmaker's model with a wire frame—a deep collar falling over the shoulders.

6.—Suede is

Undressed kid skin — specially treated cow-hide — the other side of sharkskin — the other side of sheepskin.

7.—Who wrote Puck of Pook's Hill

Rudyard Kipling — A. A. Milne — Lewis Carroll — R. L. Stevenson — W. B. Yeats.

8.—Cloves come from the clove tree, and are actually the

Dried flower buds — dried bark — dried berries — dried seeds.

9.—The liqueur creme-de-menthe is flavored with

Cinnamon — aniseed — garlic — peppermint.

10.—His real name is Schickelgruber, but he is now known as

Hitler — Goering — Goebbels — Foerster — Hess — Funk.

Answers on Page 46.

grateful for the importance of every hour it sheltered them. Outside there was a great noise of unloosed wind and water: it broke upon their talk and made them speak with lips and ears closer together; and once, when the gale had especially tried the hut and fallen again, he put up his hand and caressed her cheek with the back of it.

At dawn the wind died abruptly. They listened and reassured each other, smiling with heavy eyes.

"Let us see what it's like outside," he suggested, and they opened the door upon a drenched and twisted land.

"It's like a world half made," she said. "And we seem to be the only people in it—as if we had arrived too soon."

"It is a world half made," he answered slowly, "and we are the only people in it, too. But we haven't arrived too soon."

"Haven't we?" She was getting

sleepy. Everything outside was curiously calm. A drop of water from the roof fell near her, and she said, "Your uncle's house stood by us well."

"I'm afraid," he confessed, "that it isn't my uncle's house after all. If we abide by the same argument, it's mine. You see, he was going bankrupt and I took over the whole place a month ago. Are you angry?"

"Why should I be?"

"Because I didn't tell you before."

"Didn't you tell me before — or something? I forget—"

"Nance, wake up! You're not going to sleep now!"

"Yes; I am. Right here on my feet."

He could have kissed her in no way but the way he did. And when afterwards, still holding her so, he said defiantly, "I am not sorry!" she only lifted her face again, without opening her eyes.

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No amount of coaxing or scolding
could make Bobby eat his breakfast.



Until Mother got a hint from the
grocer, "Give him Kellogg's Rice
Bubbles. They go Snap! Crackle!
and Pop! when you pour on milk."



"Gee!" said Bobby next morning
when he heard the Snap! Crackle!
and Pop! "I like these."



Now Bobby sits down to a heaping
bowl of Kellogg's Rice Bubbles for
breakfast every day. And he looks
so much better, Mother is delighted.

Never any trouble about breakfast
when you give the kiddies Kellogg's
Rice Bubbles! They can't resist the
funny little Snap! Crackle! and
Pop! which Rice Bubbles make
when milk is poured on. And
remember, Rice Bubbles are just
the energizing, easily digested food
which growing children need.



HELP STOMACH DIGEST FOOD

With Triple-Action Remedy
and You'll Eat Like a Horse

Your system should digest two pounds of
food daily and in this work minute glands
in mouth, stomach, liver and pancreas, each
play their part. When you eat heavy, greasy,
sour or rich foods, or when you hurry
swallowing through your meals, your digestive
system becomes upset and either too much
or too little of these vital digestive juices is
poured out. Then your food does not digest
and you have gas, heartburn, nausea, pains
after food—in fact you feel wretchedly ill and
unwell. Alkaline powders and artificial
digestants are often useless, but thousands of
people have found Mother Seigel's Syrup gives
quick relief and comfort. Mother Seigel's
Syrup is a combination of herbal extracts
which stimulate the salivary, stomach and
liver glands to normal action and once this
is accomplished eating becomes a pleasure and
that sour, sick, depressed condition becomes a
thing of the past. Ask for and insist on
getting genuine Mother Seigel's Syrup.

What Women are Doing

Busy head of Army Nursing Service

ONE of the busiest women in Sydney since
the outbreak of war has been Matron E.
Kearey, head of the Australian Army Nursing
Service.

Although there has been no official call up of
nurses, Matron Kearey has been in attendance
at Victoria Barracks to supervise the enrolling
of nurses who have flocked to put their names
down for war service.

Matron Kearey had a distinguished nursing
service record in the last war. She served with
the Australian army nurses both in France
and Egypt, and on her return to Sydney she
was appointed to the nursing staff at Randwick
Military Hospital. At the time of the Cora-
nation she accompanied the Australian con-
tingent to England.

For the past 18 months she has been matron
at the Lady Davidson Home for Returned
Soldiers.

Miss E. P. Evans, secretary of the Trained
Nurses' Association, and her assistants have
also been busy at the A.T.N.A. club rooms,
Sydney, enrolling nurses over the age for war
service who have offered themselves for civilian
nursing duties.

Long service to Red Cross and Boy Scouts

TWO awards greatly prized by Mrs.
C. W. Waller, of Brisbane, are her Red Cross long service medal
and the thanks badge of the Boy
Scouts' Association.

She received the Red Cross honor
in recognition of 20 years' service to
the organization, and the Scouts'
badge for her enthusiastic support
of the movement over a period of
28 years.

First becoming associated with the
Red Cross in 1914, Mrs. Waller was
secretary of the Wilston branch
during most of the war period. She
took a leading part in the activities
of the Red Cross Kitchen.

To-day Mrs. Waller is a vice-
president of the Junior Red Cross,
and a leading member of the Bris-
bane Women's Club and the Victoria
League.

Caring for innocent victims of war

CARING for women and girls in
Australia who have been left
in impoverished
circumstances by the
interning of enemy aliens is an
important part of the work being
carried out at
present by the
Y.W.C.A.

"We are doing
all we can to help
them," said the
national president
(Mrs. J. G. Pott).
"It is most im-
portant that we
should counter-
act any stirring
up of hatred
directed against those who are
innocent victims of the war."
Plans were being made, Mrs. Pott
said, to extend the work of the
Y.W.C.A. to provide facilities for
recreation and, possibly, canteens
for girls engaged in national emer-
gency work.

"While we want our girls to fit
themselves for the work of loyal
citizens in the present conflict,"
Mrs. Pott added, "education and
training must be continued to fit
them for the task of rebuilding the
world after hostilities have ended."

Gives valuable help to sick and needy

IN her work as sister in charge
of a library run by the West
End Baptist Mission, in Adelaide,
Miss P. D. Cummings has found that
women seek books with a simple
love story while men prefer novels
that strike a moral note and have
high idealism as the central theme.

Miss Cummings has been asso-
ciated with the mission for eleven
years.

As well as providing clothes and
firewood for the needy, the mission
helps many girls to obtain employ-
ment.

Makes slides for lectures at University

PREPARING what are known as
"sections" for medical students,
to illustrate pathology lectures, is
the work of Miss Netta Wadlow,
laboratory technician in the
pathology department of the Ade-
laide University.

Discussing her work, Miss Wadlow
explained that sections are very thin
pieces of human tissue that have
been preserved, cut, stained and
mounted on glass slides for examina-
tion under a microscope.

Tissues cut from specimens of
diseased organs are preserved in a
fixative and are then dehydrated,
cleared and put in a bath of paraffin
wax. Then they are placed in a
warm oven.

When the paraffin bath has set
in block form, Miss Wadlow cuts
sections one-5000th of an inch in
thickness from the block.

Next she very carefully mounts
each section on a glass slide. The
wax is washed away with chemicals
and when the tissue has dried it is
treated with deep blue and pink
coloring, cleared and covered with a
glass cover slip.

Each slide takes about a week to
complete, but by working on a large
number at a time, Miss Wadlow pre-
pares approximately 4000 sections
each year.

She has been engaged on this type
of work for eleven years.

Garden inspires beautiful artificial flowers

FOR her hobby of making exquisite
posies of artificial flowers as
presents for her friends, Miss Mar-
jorie Hinde, of Melbourne, seeks her
inspiration in the garden. She gets
a real flower, pulls it gently to pieces,
and then, using the petals as a
pattern, cuts out the flower in her
material.

So that the colors of her artificial
flowers will be very lifelike, Miss
Hinde dyes materials to the exact
copy of a real flower which she has
near her dye pot. She says she has
great fun experimenting with mix-
tures of colors to get exactly the
right one. Or sometimes Miss Hinde
paints the petals with water-colors
or oils to get the right effect.

All kinds of materials are used for
the flowers. Lovely, rich, colorful
velvets fashion gorgeous-hued tulips.
With several twists of Miss Hinde's
clever fingers, lustrous, creamy
camellias appear from a strip of soft
duvetyn. Dainty organdie, crisp
muslin, and even soft, thin dyed silk
become lovely blooms.

"It is a fascinating pastime. But
it needs lots of patience, especially
to make tiny flowers such as prim-
roses and violets," said Miss Hinde,
as she dexterously poked in a little
yellow centre for a daisy.

"Leaves, too, are a trouble. It is
very difficult to get the right texture
so that they appear natural."

Miss Hinde often has to glaze and
dye materials to get the correct shiny
appearance.



MATRON KEAREY, head of the Australian Army
Nursing Service.

Well-known girl pilot gives lectures on first aid

WITH 900 flying hours to her
credit, Miss Freda Thompson,
one of the most experienced women
pilots in Victoria,
is ready to assist
in any home de-
fence work if
called on to do so
by the Federal
authorities.

This attractive
auburn-haired
girl, who flies her
own plane, which
she has named
O h r i s t o p h e r
Robin, is well
known in aviation
circles all over
Australia. Her
solo flight from England in 1934 is
still remembered as a notable feat
in flying history.

Miss Thompson is the only woman
in Victoria, and one of the only four
women in Australia, to hold a B
pilot's licence. In addition, she
qualified five years ago as an in-
structor.

Miss Thompson has also made a
close study of first-aid work, and
she holds a first-aid medallion and
home-nursing pendant.

As soon as war was declared she
volunteered to give first-aid lectures,
and last week gave her first lecture,
which was on bandaging, to a class
of Melbourne girls.

Calm, equable, and good at sport
—she loves riding and golf particu-
larly—Miss Thompson is a typical
example of capable versatile women
who will be of great help to Aus-
tralia during the war.



The Case of MR. JOHN B



BANISH CONSTIPATION

NYAL FIGSEN ends constipation in a
NATURAL way because it is a combina-
tion of three of Nature's own laxatives—
Figs, Senna and Cascara. Figsen is a
pleasant-tasting tablet. You chew it up.
Restores normal bowel action promptly
and gently with Figsen—equally good
for adults and children. Sold
and recommended by chemists
everywhere. 1/3 tin. 1/3

NYAL FIGSEN FOR CONSTIPATION

Weight Reduction

Seaweed reducing treatment is by far the
safest and most effective for the majority
of obesity cases, and having only health-
giving and tonic properties, cannot damage
the system like some treatments do. It will
not affect the heart and can have no ill-
effects, and on getting down to normal
weight desired, one does not immediately
put on weight again as in the case of re-
duction by exercise. This is the opinion
of Mr. Len O. Sigg, Pharmaceutical
Chemist, of Collie, W.A., who has made
a careful study of fat reducing properties
over many years. He supplies the Special
Reducing Tabs at 4/6 plus 3d post for 3
weeks' supply. There is nothing secret
about these, the formula is printed on each
tablet. The Reducing Massage Cream acts
by absorption—4/6 jar, post 6d. The Sea-
weed slimming Bath Salts are hard, as
well for drastic treatment. 2/- each
10/6 for 6 pkts., post 1/6. A diet chart
is supplied free for meals day by day.
Testimonials from all over Commonwealth.
Write him...

Simple Way To Lift Corns Right Out

No excuse for cutting corns

Tender corns, tough corns, or soft
corns can now be safely lifted out with
the finger-tips, thanks to Frosol-Ice,
says grateful user.
Only a few drops of Frosol-Ice, the
new-type antiseptic treatment, which
you can get for 1/6 at any chemist or
store, is ample to free one's feet from
every corn or callus without hurting.
This wonderful and safe remover
stops pain instantly, and does not
spread on to surrounding healthy
tissue. Frosol-Ice is a boon to corn-
burdened men and women.

Dandruff

Ruins a smart 'Hair-Do'

Clean out itchy flakes—now,
with scalp-deep, dissolving
action of CRYSTOLIS Rapid

When scalp itches and is laden
with dandruff, when hair comes
out in your comb—your head
needs help!

Dandruff is not, as many imagine,
merely those white, scaly flakes—
it is an invisible parasitic GERM,
hidden in the hair roots!

CRYSTOLIS Rapid penetrates
deep down into the hair roots—
clears away the dandruff germ
and stops that alarming falling
hair. It stimulates the scalp—
makes way for luxuriant young
hair—as well as giving your
present hair vibrant new life
and lustre. Don't let people
whisper: "Why doesn't she
brush herself before she goes
out!"... End dandruff, now,
with this Specialist's treatment.



CRYSTOLIS Rapid—At your chemist,
store or hairdresser—to-day!

CONCEAL Skin BLEMISHES IN A FEW SECONDS

Thousands now rely upon COVERSPOT to conceal all such skin blemishes as pimples, spots, scars, freckles, birthmarks, etc. You will be surprised how simple and effective it is. Get a jar of COVERSPOT from your Chemist and simply rub the COVERSPOT over the blemish like a face cream. The result is an unmarred complexion. COVERSPOT cannot be felt after application nor can it be detected in the strongest light. It remains pliant all day long and does not fade or easily rub off.

COVERSPOT is also ideal as an all-over make-up. Hides uneven sunburn on face, neck, shoulders and arms. It prevents windburn too.

Get some COVERSPOT from your Chemist to-day. Puts skin costs only 1/6. Economy jar 4/6. or write to British Harold F. Ritchie Co., Ltd., 35 York St., Sydney.

Coverspot
CONCEALS ALL SKIN BLEMISHES

DRINK HABIT CONQUERED

Secretly or Voluntarily. For 45 years we have been the means of bringing happiness to homes in misery through drink. Not costly. Write or call for FREE SAMPLE and Booklet.

Dept. B, EUCRASY CO.
225 ELIZABETH ST., SYDNEY.

BON MARCHE

HAVE BEEN FORTUNATE IN SECURING another 3,000 of these 2

Price Frocks

• All Sizes XSSW to O.S.

These Two Styles

22/11
12/11

19/11
9/11

No. 1. One style selected from a large range of smart designs in fancy silks and crepes. Available in new season's tonings, featuring light or dark grounds. XSSW to OS fittings. Usually 19/11. Special Spring Reduction 9/11

No. 2 and 3. Illustrated are just two of many styles featuring in our 12/11 range of Fancy Silk Crepes. Every Frock is perfectly made with canvas shoulder extension and is cut on the newest lines. Various floral patterns and linings to choose from. Sizes XSSW to OS. Usually 22/11. Special Spring Reduction 12/11

MAIL ORDER FORM

BON MARCHE LTD., No. 1 BROADWAY, SYDNEY.

Please send me _____ garments.

Enclosed please find £ _____ or C.O.D.

Mrs. Miss _____

Garment No. _____ Colour _____ Size _____ Quantity _____

2nd colour choice _____

BON MARCHE LTD, 1 BROADWAY, SYDNEY.

Witches' Sabbath

Continued from Page 5

cause Beni had been with them ever since he had come in with the great news. They had had to seem pleased but quite calm. They did not want him to know how wonderful he was.

Abe pushed his glasses up on to his forehead, and he and Leah, after a cautious glance at the closed door of the Wohnstube, smiled at each other. Leah, who was easily moved, could cry now if she wanted to. He patted her hand gently.

"No good, mother dear. He's a fine boy. But he hasn't won the prize yet, you know."

"He will," she said. She held her stout body, that had taken on a peasant's strength and firmness, very straight. But the easy tears of happiness still ran down her cheeks. "I know he will. Sometimes I don't believe he can be our son, Abe. We're such simple people. One day he will be something different—perhaps a judge, or even Reich president."

But when she had said that a faint shadow fell across them both and Abe Finklebaum said quickly: "All that doesn't matter. Let him be a good man first."

At that moment the door-bell rang vigorously and several people came in at once. There was the Frau Metzger and Fraulein Kreis, the Bürgermeister's unmarried daughter, and Frau Herz, Beni's mother. When Beni heard her jolly booming voice he stuffed his fingers in his

ears. He wanted so much to hear what she said. Suppose she was angry that Erna hadn't been chosen. Suppose she would not let him play with her again.

But everybody was talking at once. And Frau Herz insisted on being heard. So that she almost shouted.

"No, thank God. If it had been our Erna there would be an end of it. A real little goose, if ever there was one."

Everybody exclaimed against this. And Frau Herz admitted, under pressure, that Erna was an angel. Still, for the sake of Vogelstadt she was thankful that Beni had been chosen. You could trust Beni. At which point Fraulein Kreis got in a word edgewise. Her father had sent a message. If Beni won the prize he would turn out the Singverein and the fire-brigade to welcome him.

Beni couldn't sit still any more. He crept out into the passage and took down his leather coat and woollen cap from their peg and ran out by the back door. He kept his sleigh in the backyard and a minute later he was running and riding with it down the street towards the Gasthaus zum Grünen Laube. The beautiful painted sign which hung over the door was hidden under a sheet of snow. But the windows winked merrily at the passer-by, telling him how warm it was inside and how good a foaming mug of Hofbrau and a handful of pretzel tasted on a winter's night. The Vogelstadt Singverein were practising their Christmas carols. Beni could almost see them seated on either side of Herr Herz's long table, their faces very red, their eyes fixed anxiously on Herr Ernst, the church organist who waved a long stick like a real conductor.

"Silent night, joyful night!"

BENI loved their singing. He stood still to listen. It was real night now. Beyond the last house the cheerful Hauptstrasse became a black, lonely road that wound up into the mountains where the fir trees slept under their thick white blankets. How silent it must be up there. No birds twittering, no squirrels flashing from branch to branch. Or perhaps, Beni thought suddenly, it might not be so quiet. No one knew what happened at night, in winter, among the mountains. Johann Benz, the wood-cutter, who had lost his way, was found asleep under the trees and never woke to tell what he had seen. Perhaps now that humans didn't come any more, strange things crept out of their hiding places, witches who crouched under the spellbound trees, blinking their wicked red eyes and mumbling and waiting for something small and lost. Beni caught his breath. He was frightened now. The black invisibility of the mountains hung over him like a huge hand, ready to pounce on him and crush him.

But it was all over in a minute. There was the tall shadow of the church where God lived. There were the kind houses, their steep white roofs pulled down warmly over their eaves, their eyes blinking reassurance.

"All right, Beni. You're safe with us. Witches don't come to Vogelstadt—"

The answer is—

- 1.—It has rich iron deposits
- 2.—Army.
- 3.—Pause.
- 4.—Stock.
- 5.—A deep collar falling over the shoulders.
- 6.—Undressed kid skin.
- 7.—Kipling.
- 8.—Dried flower buds.
- 9.—Peppermint.
- 10.—Hitler.

Questions on Page 44.

It was silly to have been frightened. Beni rolled a hard little lump of snow and threw it against one of the bright windows of the Gasthaus. A minute later it opened cautiously. A shadow painted itself against the light behind.

"Erna!"

"Is that you, Beni?"

"Erna—I've got my sleigh. The snow's just right. I could pull you up the hill. And we could ride down again."

"I can't come out. Mother says I've got a cold."

"Have you?"

"I don't think so. I just sneezed."

He took a deep breath. He hadn't really expected her to come. He had only wanted a chance to speak to her, to explain how it had all happened.

"Erna—listen—honest—I didn't want to be chosen. I was sure you would win. I didn't know you'd forget your lines—"

"I didn't," she said. He was too amazed to answer. And she gathered some snow off the window sill and threw it at him. It fell softly on his upturned face like a caress. "You are so silly," she said.

She shut the window and then opened it again. "I love you, Beni, darling. That's why. Good night."

He walked home very slowly, trailing his sleigh behind him. It was almost too difficult to understand. But he knew now for certain that he would win the silver medal. And then he would give it to Erna and tell her that it was really she who had brought it back to Vogelstadt.

He woke with the first grey winter's light. For a minute he lay still, trying to remember why he had to wake. Then it rushed over and he began to say, "And am I really among my people? No longer despised and rejected?" Just to make sure that Schiller's "Jungfrau" was dying, just as she had been doing yesterday, heroically but most unhistorically, as Fraulein Adela had pointed out, on the battlefield. It was all right. He went right through to the last line. "Short is the pain—eternal is the joy." Then he jumped up, clasping his flannel nightshirt close about him, for it was bitter in the attic bedroom, and climbed on a chest underneath the window so that he could see the church clock. It looked back at him over the grey roofs and his cheerful face said, "It's high time, Beni," and a minute later its cracked old voice changed eight o'clock. No one could pretend that they didn't know how late it was. One by one the shadows in the street lifted and a patch of frozen sunshine fell on the house opposite.

Please turn to Page 49

A SPRAINED ANKLE is so painful that it calls for an immediate application of Sloan's Liniment. As soon as Sloan's covers the skin, its quickly-penetrating warmth brings a rush of purifying, healing, fresh blood to the injured part. Sloan's makes Nature work faster to ease the pain, reduce the swelling, promotes healing. No painful rubbing is needed. Just a gentle patting on of Sloan's at intervals until the stiffness goes away. Accidents happen frequently. Buy Sloan's. Be prepared.

SLOAN'S
Family LINIMENT

MAKES NATURE WORK Faster

Mandrake the Magician



THE STORY SO FAR:

MANDRAKE: Master magician, is at Teiba, a Caribbean seaport, with
LOTHAR: His giant Nubian servant, and is endeavoring to rescue the beautiful
PRINCESS NARDA: Who has been kidnapped and taken to Teiba Castle by
GENERAL MANUEL: A powerful and sinister personage who has got Narda's brother,

SEGRID: Into his power and threatens to expose him. On setting out to rescue Narda, Mandrake is halted by two of Manuel's henchmen, one of whom makes a vicious swing at Lothar with a wicked-looking machete. The blow misses, but cleaves a banana tree in halves. Using his magic, Mandrake puts the tree together again, whereupon the two armed islanders take fright and bolt. NOW READ ON.

WHEN MANUEL'S SOLDIERS RETURN TO THE SCENE OF THE BANANA BATTLE...

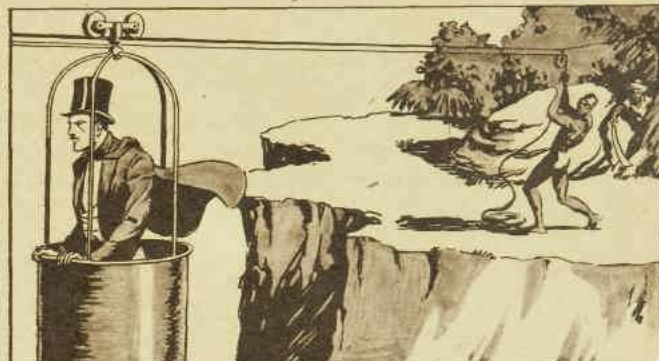
LOOK--THE BANANA TREE IS REALLY CUT DOWN, THE BANANAS ARE STILL IN THEIR SKINS AND--

AND NOTHING REALLY HAPPENED--EXCEPT THOSE TWO ARE GONE! AFTER THEM!

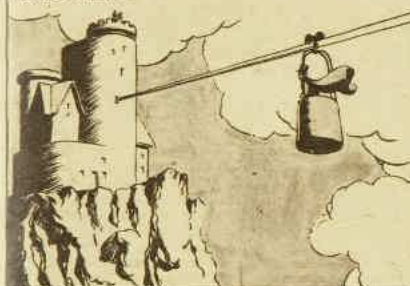


THERE'S THE CASTLE. THIS BASKET AND CABLE ARRANGEMENT SEEM TO BE THE ONLY ENTRANCE.

BIG WHIRLPOOL DOWN THERE. CAREFUL. NO SLIP.



HEADED FOR TEIBA CASTLE, MANDRAKE RIDES HIGH ABOVE THE DREADED WHIRLPOOL--"THE DEVIL'S MAW".



SEE, MANDRAKE HAS FOUND HIS WAY HERE, GENERAL MANUEL!

SO FAR--NOW WE SHALL SEE WHAT HAPPENS NEXT, DEAR NARDA. WATCH!



LOTHAR IS SUDDENLY FELLED WITH A BLOW FROM THE FLAT OF A MACHETE--THE CABLE IS SLASHED--



HE SAW ME--WATCHING. HE MUST--HAVE THOUGHT--I PLANNED TO LURE HIM--HERE--

NOW--IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE WHAT HE THINKS, DEAR NARDA. NO MAN HAS EVER ESCAPED FROM THE DEVIL'S MAW!



LOTHAR GOES AT THE FIRST OF HIS ASSAILANTS--



--THEN DISPOSES OF THE SECOND OF MANUEL'S GUARDS--



AND DIVES HEADLONG INTO THE "DEVIL'S MAW" FROM WHICH NO MAN HAS EVER BEEN KNOWN TO ESCAPE ALIVE!



AS MANDRAKE LIES UNCONSCIOUS IN THE GRIP OF THE GIANT WHIRLPOOL, LOTHAR HEADS TOWARDS HIM--



--FINDS IT IMPOSSIBLE TO SWIM UPWARDS AGAINST THE FORCE OF THE SWIRLING WATER



--SEES AN UNDERWATER OPENING IN THE CASTLE FOUNDATION--AND BATTLES HIS WAY TO IT WITH ALL THE STRENGTH OF HIS GIANT MUSCLES--



WHEW--AIR!

TO BE CONTINUED!

--AND ENTERS A HALF-SUBMERGED CHAMBER--THE FIRST MAN EVER KNOWN TO ESCAPE THE "DEVIL'S MAW"!

Guaranteed not to shrink, madam!
These rayon crepes wash like cottons."



No more dry-cleaning bills!
 Have you kept yourself
 poor because you were
 afraid to risk your rayon
 frocks in the wash tub?



—But now . . . into the
 tub your best frocks go.
 No more shrinking rayon
 crepe. Always wash ac-
 cording to easy directions.



All smart stores are selling
 frocks of Grafton Anti-
 Shrink. Be sure they bear
 the Grafton tab or the
 above label.

**—We give an unconditional guarantee of non-shrinkage
 with every Grafton rayon crepe or crepe-de-chine we sell!**

You might have vowed that you'd never buy another crepe frock. You might have cried to the high heavens that you'd seen your last silk frock shrink in the wash! . . . And go uneven at the hemline or tight in the bodice after washing. But forget all that!

Now you can go into any store. Buy frocks or piece materials of "Grafton Anti-Shrink" and receive an unconditional guarantee of replacement if they should shrink by the width of a thread when washed according to the easy directions.

As for colours? Designs? Lovelier prints have never come out of England. Tubbing actually increases the sparkle and beauty of Grafton Anti-Shrink fabrics. Doubly important!—Grafton rayons become even silkier after washing.

Protect yourself! Make certain that you see the words "Grafton Anti-Shrink, patented" along every yard of the selvedge when you buy by the yard. Garments of Grafton Anti-Shrink are always tabbed and carry the Grafton ticket for quick recognition.

Ask for
Grafton
ANTI-SHRINK
PATENT APPLIED FOR IN AUSTRALIA



Obtainable at
 all stores or
 write direct
 to Box 624FF,
 G.P.O., Syd-
 ney.

AS EASY TO IRON AS A POCKET HANKIE. GRAFTON WASHABLE RAYON CREPES, CREPES-DE-CHINE IN FROCKS OR BY THE YARD, AT ALL SMART STORES.

BENI stood a moment, looking at it. The Voights had their Christmas tree already. It leaned familiarly against their doorway as though it had walked down from the mountains and was waiting for someone to let it in. To-night it would be standing in the Voights' Wohnstube, ablaze with candles.

He sighed. He wished he had a Christmas tree. Then he would be quite like everyone else. But he knew he mustn't ask. His mother and father would look at each other with distressed and puzzled eyes. And he couldn't bear them to be unhappy. Sometimes he felt that though they were older and bigger he had to take care of them so that they shouldn't be hurt. He had an idea that they were terribly afraid of being that.

Still, supposing he had a Christmas tree. . . . Then he could ask Erna to see it. He might even have a party like the other children.

He clambered down from his perch. Fraulein Adela was coming for him in the sleigh at nine o'clock. The Prutung was at eleven at Buntersee. By the afternoon it would be all over. And his mother had said he must wash specially.

Downstairs Leah Finkelbaum laid out breakfast. The night before she had baked a Haselnusstorte for Beni. And now it was heating in the oven and the Wohnstube smelt warm and comfortingly of coffee and hot bread.

"We must have a cup ready for the Fraulein when she comes," Mother Leah said, bustling round. "She will be cold. It is good of her to go with Beni. But then he's her favorite. Yesterday she told me so."

"She says that to all the mothers," Abe remarked placidly. But she took no notice of him. He knew just as well as she did how everyone felt about Beni. And now when he came back with the Silver Medal he would be a hero. How happy she was. If only she could think of something to surprise him.

"Nu, Junge, do you know your lines?" Abe asked. For there was Beni standing in the doorway, in his best suit and his face shining as though it had been polished.

They ate breakfast in anxious haste. At nine punctually sleigh bells tinkled more and more brightly and then shook themselves into silence outside the shop door. Fraulein Adela, wrapped up to the tip of her sharp red nose, very graciously unwrapped herself enough to drink Leah's steaming cup of coffee. Hans Scheim, seated on the box and muffled in so many coats that he looked more like a bear than a man, twinkled his rheumy old eyes at Beni who had his pockets full of sugar for the two grey horses. They stood docilely with their ears pricked and sent up a cloud of steam into the still cold air.

"Going to give Buntersee one on the nose, eh, Junge?" Hans said, chuckling.

Then it was time to go. Beni crept in under the moth-eaten fur rug and felt very small beside Fraulein Adela.

By Far Too Fat & Flabby

OVERWEIGHT, CONSTIPATED PEOPLE.

The longer you suffer constipation the more unhealthy fat you are likely to put on. When digestive wastes are not dispersed regularly they get absorbed into the blood stream. Flabby fat forms, and you wonder why you look and feel bloated and unfit. Fermenting food poisons cause indigestion, sick headache, biliousness, pimples, bad breath, vague pains and depression.

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Witches' Sabbath

Continued from Page 46

who sat straight and tall as a flagpole. Leah, who had tried very hard not to, kissed Beni on the cheek. She knew how anxious he was by the shadows under his eyes.

"And it will be just the same if you don't win," she whispered. "We'll have a surprise waiting for you."

"Good luck, Beni!" Abe said in a deep, manly voice.

The sleigh bells sounded fainter and fainter. The doors and windows closed again. The Vogelstaders went back to their breakfasts. And everyone said the same thing in different ways.

"Let us hope he comes back with the medal. The Finkelbaums will be so happy. They are such good people."

Only the Burgermeister and the Postamt had telephones. So it was the Burgermeister who heard Fraulein Adela's high, excited voice first. Five minutes later the news had spread from end to end of Vogelstadt. The schoolchildren were out and the fire brigade and the Singverein. The fire brigade, which had had secret instructions, appeared in full uniform pushing the red painted hand-pump which was their pride, and the Singverein wore their colored sashes across their shoulders.

It was Frau Benz, the widow of the dead woodcutter, who told the Finkelbaums. Everybody bought their Christmas trees from Frau Benz, whose son was taking his father's place. She was stout and good-natured, and Leah Finkelbaum cried on her shoulder.

"Na, na, ihr Frauenzimmer!" Abe grumbled, and patted them both on the shoulder with manly tolerance.

"We must do something special," Leah said. And then she looked at Frau Benz with her soft brown eyes full of tears and recklessness. "He wanted a Christmas tree—" she said almost in a whisper.

"And why not, indeed?" Frau Benz demanded. "The Lord God made trees for us all, didn't He?"

AND the two stout women took hands like children and ran across the street, pushing through the Singverein, that was just beginning to form ranks. Abe Finkelbaum, whom they had ignored, climbed up on his ladder and pulled down a boxful of tinsel stars and flying angels. He shook his head. He only hoped that God understood women and had pity on them.

The early winter dusk settled on the valley. Through a veil of mist the mountains loomed up ominously, as though they wished they could fall on the solitary sleigh pulling slowly up the hill to Vogelstadt. Beni crept very close to Fraulein Adela. He wished the summer would come when the mountains would be friendly again. And he was cold and tired with excitement. He couldn't shake off the terrible moment when someone had called his name and he had had to stand up, feeling incredibly small, in the midst of hostile Buntersee.

The snub-nosed Hildegarde Fasse, with two pigails tied with blue bows, had had to be led out, howling. For, as the Oberlehrer Schmidt had said, with splendid impartiality, there could be no doubt that Beni Finkelbaum, of Vogelstadt, had won the silver medal.

Fraulein Adela put her arm round Beni to make him more comfortable. She was a severe woman who stood no nonsense, but Hans was dozing on his box and there was no one to see her. Besides, it was pleasant to feel the small frail body snuggle with such defenceless trust against hers. Life was a lonely business, especially if, through your superior education, you were set high up in authority. In this moment of weakness she liked to imagine that Beni belonged to her and that they loved each other.

Beni fell asleep, lulled by the lazy tinkle of sleigh bells and the warmth of Fraulein Adela's shoulder.

The Singverein woke him up. The Singverein, headed by the Burgermeister, who had a useful bass, met them on the outskirts of the town. They sang "Gaudemus Igitur," which, though it had no special reference to Beni, gave them a splendid chance to let themselves go. The fire brigade changed their bell in strict time. It was enough to wake anyone.

"That was well done, Beni Finkelbaum," the Burgermeister said, smiling into Beni's face and shaking his small cold hand. "You showed these Buntersee folk what they're good for." Then he graciously gave place to Leah who rubbed a wet cheek against Beni's and whispered, "We've got something special for you."

And a minute later the sleigh, moving very slowly down the gaily-lit Hauptstrasse, came in sight of the Laden sum Neusten Parison Moden. And there in the doorway stood a tall proud Christmas tree, bright with every star and angel in Abe Finkelbaum's collection. Beni stood up and shouted. Now he was just like everyone else. And as though a last barrier had been broken down the children pushed through the Singverein and danced and chirped about him like excited sparrows.

"Hurra, hurra, hurra!"

ERNA was there. She rode the last few yards perched on the edge of the sleigh, pressed close to Beni, and looking like one of Abe Finkelbaum's flying angels. She whispered to him, "I did it on purpose. I knew they'd choose me if I didn't. I knew you'd win. I wanted you to."

They held each other's hands fast. It seemed to Beni that no one had ever been so happy.

The snow had gone. The fields were a sullen, lifeless brown and the trees stood stark and grim as though they could never blossom again. It was a sad, strange time.

Perhaps it was because all the color had gone out of everything that no one took much notice of the brown-painted lorry full of brown-clad, sombre-looking men carrying a flag that drove up to the Burgermeister's house and discharged its load.

BENI saw them. His desk was next the window and at that moment Fraulein Adela was trying to explain the decimal point to Erna, which was likely to be a long business. So that Beni didn't have to pay attention. He watched a tall young man who seemed to be the leader go into the Burgermeister's house. He didn't even knock.

He was gone a long time. When he came out the Burgermeister, looking worried and rather pale, came with him. He was making funny little gestures as though he were protesting about something. And the young man took no notice but barked an order and the other brown-clad men fell into line behind him. They were coming towards the schoolhouse. It was all rather queer. So few strangers came to Vogelstadt.

"You are a perfect goose, Erna Herz," Fraulein Adela said. "Beni, stand up and see if you can explain to her—"

The door opened roughly. No one had knocked. The young man came in with the Burgermeister at his heels. Fraulein Adela looked startled and indignant and the whole class stood up out of respect for the Burgermeister.

But for once the Burgermeister seemed to have nothing to say. The young man raised his arm and shouted something. And after a moment, Fraulein Adela, with a white face, raised her arm, too. And suddenly the whole class broke into a gale of high-pitched laughter. She looked so funny, standing there with an arm raised, showing a tear under the sleeve. But the next minute they were mouse-quiet—frightened, they didn't know of what.

The young man talked. He talked in a short broken way like a man giving orders. Fraulein Adela said nothing. Her eyes had dropped to her nervously fidgeting hands. And finally she seemed frightened, too, for she said, "Yes, indeed—quite right," very quickly. And then she said, "Stand up, Beni Finkelbaum."

Please turn to Page 50



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A.W.W. 1939

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TOOHEYS OATMEAL STOUT

SHOULD EU-thymol every day?

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Blotchy Face Lifeless Eyes

WAS SLEEPLESS AND ANAEMIC.

"I had no energy and had blotches on my complexion," states Mrs. L.M.G., of Newport, Vic. "Since I was eighteen I have always suffered anaemia, and during the last few years have been tired-out and sleepless."

"I have just taken a course of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills and they have fully restored my health. I have gained energy and my skin has cleared of the blotches. Now I sleep well, and wake up ready for a good day's work."

Women and girls find that Dr. Williams' Pink Pills do a power of good, for this renowned preparation really helps to make rich, red blood. With a refreshed, nutritious blood supply, your skin clears of spots and pimples, a lovely bloom appears on lips and cheeks, and your eyes brighten. Your nerves grow stronger and every part of your system becomes revitalized. You look and feel bright, colourful, youthful. Begin Dr. Williams' Pink Pills now. At chemists and stores, 3/- bottle.***

Witches' Sabbath

Continued from Page 49

He stood up at once. For a moment he thought that the stranger must have heard about the silver medal and come to congratulate him. But then he knew that this was something quite different. The young man looked at him with such cold angry eyes. They seemed to be drowning all the strength out of his body so that he could hardly stand. The tears gathered in his throat. He didn't know why he wanted to cry. The other children seemed to know. At least they knew that something frightening was going to happen. They sat with their heads bowed, not looking at anyone.

"So!" the young man said. "Even in this village you have your plague-spot."

The children peered at Beni furtively. They didn't understand about plague-spots. But they understood that Beni was different. They remembered that he had always been different. It was as though a little gust of a strange hot wind blew over them.

Presently the young man went out again with the Bürgermeister still trailing behind him and the door slammed. Fraulein Adela said in a low voice, "You can sit down, Beni." But she wouldn't look at him at all. She told Willy Voigt to explain to Erna about decimals.

Afterwards she kept the class back. She had something to say to them. Not to Beni. Beni could go home.

It was strange to go out of the schoolhouse all alone. It only happened when you had been so bad that no one would speak to you any more. It had never happened to Beni. Usually they all rushed out together, shouting and jostling each other. Now everything was very quiet. The whole of Vogelstadt seemed to know what Beni had done and to be holding its breath. A group of the brown men stood outside the Gasthaus. They stared at Beni as he crept past and shouted something. He couldn't understand what it was. He wanted to run. But couldn't. His feet seemed to be made of lead.

The Laden zum Neusten Parisen Moden was small and narrow so that when more than one customer came in it seemed quite crowded. When Beni saw the young man and the Frau Doktor he stopped in the open doorway. The Frau Doktor had been buying some knitting wool. The skein was still clutched in her hand and she was staring up at the young man with round, frightened eyes. He had been talking to her. Now suddenly he took her by the shoulders and pushed her in front of him to the door. "A good German should know better," he shouted. When he saw Beni crouched back against the wall he spat angrily. "Little swine!" he said.

Beni couldn't move for a while. His father and mother stood behind the counter. They looked like people who had died suddenly and hadn't had time to fall down. They didn't see Beni. Perhaps they couldn't bear to see him. He crept away.

At the back of the house was the yard where he and Erna played together when the weather was too bad for their hiding-place by the river. Abe Finkelbaum had put up a swing for them and a little bench. Beni crouched down by it, burying his face in his arms, trying not to be sick. When Erna peered through the yard fence she didn't care any more what Fraulein Adela said. She ran in and knelt down beside him and held him close.

"Oh, Beni, darling, what is it? What have you done? Why is everyone so angry?"

He couldn't answer. He didn't know. But he clung to her, feeling her comfort pour like a warm tide through his shivering, aching body.

The brown men stayed on. Their leader, who wore two stars on his collar, lived at the Gasthaus and his men were quartered all over the village. At night they met together and made speeches and sang songs. Their songs weren't like the songs of the Singverein. They sounded splendid. But there was something queer about them. The faces of the singers grew red and angry and at the end there was a lot of shouting and laughter that didn't sound like laughter.

At first the villagers didn't like the strangers. But then they began to go to their meetings. At night they crowded round the Gasthaus or marched in procession through the village, shouting and singing. When they met each other they raised their arms in stern salute.

ALL day long one of the brown men stood outside the Laden zum Neusten Parisen Moden. At first people came as usual but he spoke sharply to them and they hesitated and then went away, walking fast as though they were afraid the Finkelbaums would see them. Then they didn't come at all. The little shop was always empty. The bell only rang when Beni came in from school, and then it sounded loud and frightened. He couldn't wait to escape the sad, reproachful shadows of the Neulichten that no one wanted any more. He had to run through them into the lighted Wohnstube into his mother's arms. Even if he had somehow brought disgrace on them she still held him close and safe.

"And how was school to-day, Beni?"

"Fine, Mother."

"Did they give you good marks?"

"Yes."

It wasn't true. And one day soon she would know it wasn't true. But there was such fear and anxiety in her voice. He couldn't tell her that they hadn't given him any marks at all. All through the class he had tried to make Fraulein Adela look at him and say, "Now, Beni—" But she wouldn't look at him. When she came to the children on either side of him her eyes made a sort of jump and her lips pursed themselves. And he had learnt the lesson perfectly.

His father's hand rested on his shoulder.

"All that matters is that you should be good, Beni."

So his father knew what was wrong. But his father was so sunk in sorrow that Beni didn't dare ask. He could only try harder and harder to be good. He was sure that if Fraulein Adela would only tell him what he did that made everyone so angry and unhappy he could put it right. But she never spoke to him. The other children knew. When he tried to join them on the playground they pushed him off, not speaking, pretending they didn't see him, and afterwards their play was rough and cruel as though they wanted to hurt someone. Erna wouldn't play at all. She stood by herself, munching her Butterbrochen. It was spring now. She wore a new frock. She looked so pretty in it and he wanted to speak to her so much. He skirted the playground till he stood beside her. He said shyly:

"That's such a pretty frock, Erna."

She flashed a glance at him. Her blue eyes were wide with fright and bewilderment, as though she couldn't believe what she knew was true.

"You mustn't speak to me."

"Why mustn't I?"

"Mother says so." She looked about her wildly like a squirrel ready to take to flight. "Please go away."

"What is it? What have I done? You tell me, Erna."

"I don't know, Beni. But it's something awful."

"Don't you like me any more?"

"I can't—I mustn't. If I did they wouldn't speak to me either—" She broke off with a little gasp. The young man with the two stars on his collar had come on to the playground. Fraulein Adela walked beside him, her thin hands clasped over her stomach, her weak, red-rimmed eyes blinking through their glasses. Something strange happened. A shadow fell across the playground. The children stood dead still, their arms raised, and shouted shrilly. Beni raised his arm with the rest. He shouted, too, in his thin high voice. But he was too late. His voice broke in its loneliness.

NO one seemed to have heard him. The young man gave an order. The children lifted their feet—rechts, links, rechts, links. They swung into marching order. Beni couldn't stand out alone like that. He couldn't bear it any more. Perhaps if he marched better than any of them they wouldn't mind. They would see how hard he was trying. Fraulein Adela might even say, "Bravo, Beni!"

But as he passed the brown man saw him and picked him up by the scruff of the neck and flung him out.

"Right, left, right, left—"

Beni picked himself up. There was blood on his cheek. But he wasn't crying. He wasn't even frightened. But then he wasn't Beni Finkelbaum. He was some terrible stranger, burning with hate, who wanted to kill and kill. He wanted to kill the young man in brown and Fraulein Adela and everyone in the whole world who laughed and jeered and made Erna hate him. He wanted to hurt them so that they would never laugh and jeer again. Like a mad dog he flew at the young man and struck him with wild, flying, powerless fists.

It was all over in a minute. He heard Fraulein Adela scream and the terrified shouting of the children. But he didn't know that they had beaten him till he found himself outside on the street. Alone.

Please turn to Page 52



Thrilling NEW Lipsticks

that spell R-O-M-A-N-C-E

Keep your lips soft, lovely, burning, the way they do in America and London, with Kathleen Court's new spiral lipsticks. Shades are thrilling and include Imperial, Royal, Tan, Sable, Querry, Diamond, Ceylan and Double of No. 2, 2 1/2 at all Chemists and Department Stores, or direct from Miss Kathleen Court herself, Shell House, Carling Lane, Sydney. Shave look guaranteed!

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The Australian Women's Weekly

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Before Bedtime Start Driving Out BRONCHITIS

Sleep Sound All Night.

Enjoy a coughless night—sleep sound and awake refreshed—just be wise enough to take 2 or 3 doses of BUCKLEY'S CANADIOL Mixture (triple acting) before you go to bed—It's safe for the kids, also. For bronchial coughs—for tough, old, persistent coughs, take a few doses of Buckley's—by far the largest-selling cough medicine in all of blizzard cold Canada—and feel as good as ever again. It "acts like a flash"—and it's only 2/3 at all chemists and stores.

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CANADIOL
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A SINGLE SIF PROVES IT



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De Witt's Antacid Powder frees you from stomach trouble because it kills excess stomach acid. One dose quickly stops after-meal pain, heartburn and flatulence.

Briefly, here is the triple-action De Witt's Antacid Powder formula that has proved so successful. *Malt Diastase* to aid digestion; *English Kaolin* to protect the stomach lining; *Calcium Carb.*, *Magnesium Carb.* and *Sodium Bicarb.* to neutralise burning stomach acids.

De Witt's Antacid Powder is the modern, triple-action treatment for indigestion and all other Stomach Troubles.

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For Indigestion, Acid Stomach, Heartburn and Flatulence. In sky-blue canisters, large size 2/6. New Giant size 4/6.

It isn't washing-up that spoils the sink..

... IT'S HARSH CLEANING!

If you will clean the sink with harsh, gritty scourers, what can you expect? It's sure to be scratched and dull in no time. Remember, scratches harbour dirt—and often germs—and make cleaning harder as time goes on. Porcelain is delicate—it requires smooth-cleaning with Vim's soap-coated grains. A Vim-cleaned sink keeps its gleaming, new look and can be cleaned with one swift, light rub.



VIM REMOVES THE DIRT... BUT SAVES THE SURFACE!

A LEVER PRODUCT

7-24-37

Real Life Stories

Short and Snappy

MODERN BEGGING

AS my husband and I waited outside a railway station, a neatly-dressed young man approached us. Raising his hat, he politely asked for the "wherewithal to purchase his daily vitamins."

He assured us that he had eaten his proteins, but so far that morning had had no vitamins.

Such an "approach" was too much for my husband—he handed over the necessary coin.

10/6 to Mrs. A. J. Goodman, Ennis Rd., Milson's Point, N.S.W.

POOR PIGLET

A LITTLE pig, away from its mother, had become a real pet. He slept in a box with a man's old coat as a bed.

Rising early to do the milking I heard blood-curdling squeals and rushing over to the box found the pudgy pig wedged so tightly in one of the coat sleeves that I had to cut him out.

He had found a specially warm place to sleep, but it was meant for a smaller piglet.

2/6 to Betty Atkinson, Charnwood Rd., St. Kilda, Vic.

LIGHTER DIDN'T FAIL

IT was at a race meeting that I noticed smoke issuing from a lady's handbag.

When her attention was drawn to the smouldering article the fire was quickly stamped out.

"One of the disadvantages of efficiency," she said as she thanked me. "You see, my cigarette-lighter will light."

2/6 to Miss M. Bell, George St., Stepney, S.A.

NOT SUCH A GOAT

WITH the recent rise in the price of wolfram there was an influx of prospectors to Wolfram, an old, almost deserted mining camp near Cairns.

The place had become almost overrun with goats, which ransacked the prospectors' canvas homes, eating everything eatable and bursting open bags of flour, etc.

One prospector thought he would trick them by putting a sheet of iron across his tent doorway. But he had no luck—not only was his place invaded and turned topsy-turvy, but on returning from work he found that a goat and her two kids had settled down on his bed.

2/6 to Mrs. L. Luxton, Wolfram, via Cairns, N. Qld.

NEEDED SPINACH THEN

A FRIEND was returning home from work one night, when a small boy halted him.

"Hi, Mister! I've just been seeing my favorite film star, and you're his double!"

Naturally my friend felt very flattered. "And who is your favorite film star?" he asked.

"Popeye," came the prompt reply. 2/6 to Mrs. T. O'Neill, Post Office, Gulgong, N.S.W.

HIS ONE THOUGHT

A NEIGHBOR was painting the roof of his home when a sudden gust of wind unbalanced a large tin of paint.

Rolling down the roof and over the guttering it scattered red paint in all directions and made such a clatter that his wife came running out.

She looked up anxiously, but all her frantic husband could gasp out was, "Why weren't you there to catch it?"

2/6 to Miss N. Broadbridge, Cooma-warra, S.A.

SEND IN YOUR REAL LIFE AND "SNAPPY" STORIES

ONE guinea is paid for the best Real Life Story each week. For the best item published under the heading "Short and Snappy" we pay 10/6. Prizes of 2/6 are given for other items published.

Real Life Stories may be exciting or tragic, but must be AUTHENTIC. Anecdotes describing amusing or unusual incidents are eligible for the "Short and Snappy" column. Full address at top of Page 3.

Deadly cobra as bedmate

AUSTRALIAN'S CLOSE CALL IN INDIA

IN August, 1935, I was employed in Bombay, India, by an engineering firm which had the contract for installing a power plant in a small township called Khadwa, 200 miles north-east of the city and about 11 miles south of the Norbada River.

Having the week-end free, and being a keen sportsman, a workmate and I decided to spend Saturday night and Sunday on a trip up the river, where an abundance of game was to be found.

After stowing the equipment in a car, we made for the river, and following it via a rough jungle track for about five miles, we decided, as it was getting on towards dusk, to camp.

Having pitched the tent, lit a fire, and had a meal, we yarned for a while, and then, as the mosquitoes were getting almost unbearable, and the only relief was under the mosquito nets, we turned in and were soon asleep.

I woke just before dawn, with a feeling of dread.

The moonlight was streaming through the flaps of the tent, my arm was outstretched and coiled up over it was a huge cobra.

I hardly dared breathe. My first impulse was to tear myself away,



but I knew that, no matter how quick the movement, I would not be able to evade the lightning thrust of that head.

After what seemed an eternity, the first pale streaks of dawn appeared, and, to my intense relief, my pal awoke. However, as my face was only a few inches from the snake's head, I dared not speak.

After throwing off his mosquito net, and what seemed to me maddening deliberation, he lit a cigarette, then turned towards me.

He took in the situation at a glance and very slowly reached for a shotgun. "Don't move, whatever you do!" he murmured.

The cobra appeared to be watching him and raised its head, its black beady eyes glinting—a terrifying sight.

Levelling the gun, he blew the head of the cobra to pieces.

The roar of the gun seemed to break the spell, and for the first time in my life I faintly.

11/1/- to D. Grimshaw, Queen St., Altona, Vic.

"Don't move, whatever you do," my mate murmured.

Cattle stampeded

WHEN about seventeen years old I, with others, was taking a mob of 800 bullocks from Long Flat station, on the Upper Macleay River, to Maitland.

Flooded rivers caused considerable delay, and after being on the road for two months we camped on a spur of the Barrington range.

It was my watch, and about midnight, to keep myself awake, I began carving my name on a small gum tree. Suddenly an opossum ran up a nearby sapling. This caused the mob to stampede, and with a wild rush they bolted wildly down to the river bed.

Flattening myself against the tree I waited breathless, thinking I might be trampled to death. But I escaped without a scratch.

It was afterwards discovered that the tree behind which I had been sheltering had been stripped of its bark on either side.

2/6 to Walter C. Cheers, Ascog Tce., Toowoong, Qld.

Absent-minded beggars

TWO Englishmen employed on my brother's cattle station in the New England district of New South Wales had been finding it difficult to remember to put their supplies for the week on their pack-horse when they were sent out to work on the run.

They invariably found that the butter, the jam, or some other important article of food had been left behind, and to overcome this difficulty they decided to spend the previous night in a tent outside. In this way they figured that they would have to return to the hut as things were needed for the evening meal.

Feeling convinced that this time they had placed everything on the pack, they were well on their way by daylight. But, alas! They had left the pack-horse tied to the fence.

2/6 to Miss V. Carey, Killabash, via Wingham, N.S.W.

Signs of mischief

MY two small sons were unusually quiet, and, as any mother knows, that is a sign of mischief.

Investigating, my heart almost stopped when I found master four-year-old with his Daddy's razor trying to shave his two-year-old brother.

The long blade was one side of the baby's neck, and the handle the other side, forming a collar. Seeing blood on both of them, I took it away and bathed them both to see what damage had been done.

Baby had a small cut on one side of his neck, and four-year-old had a piece of skin off the top of one finger.

2/6 to Mrs. A. Sander, 15 Moffatt St., Ipswich, Qld.

A busy bee

IT was a hot, exhausting day and I was showing visitors our beehives. One man was worrying me by constantly asking questions. I answered him as best I could and when he opened his mouth to ask more questions he swallowed a bee!

A second later the bee stung his throat and it swelled so rapidly and became so painful that medical aid had to be sought to remove the sting.

He could not talk for days, and although sorry for his bad luck I was glad not to have to listen to his chatter!

2/6 to Miss Esther McLennan, Lyons St. North, Ballarat, Vic.

BETTY WAS A "PICKER"

(Betty was thin, pale and 'nervy' until the Doctor traced the trouble back to her sleep)

BETTY, THIS WILL NEVER DO! WE'VE SIMPLY GOT TO BUILD YOU UP

SATURDAY AT LUNCH...
BETTY DARLING, PLEASE FINISH YOUR MEAL
SHE HARDLY EATS A THING THESE DAYS BETTER TAKE HER ALONG TO SEE DOCTOR RUSSELL

THE REASON WHY BETTY PICKS AT HER FOOD MRS WILSON IS REALLY DUE TO HER SLEEP. YOU SEE CHILDREN GROW DURING SLEEP. THIS USES UP THEIR ENERGY
DR. RUSSELL GAVE BETTY A THOROUGH EXAMINATION

HEARTBEATS AND BREATHING AT NIGHT ALSO USE ENERGY... AND NATURALLY, IF THIS ENERGY ISN'T REPLACED, THEN THEY GET IRRITABLE AND FINICKY. IT'S REALLY 'NIGHT-STARVATION'! SO GIVE HER HORLICKS

SIX WEEKS LATER
CAN I HAVE A SECOND HELPING MUMMY?
OF COURSE, DARLING
LOOKS AS IF THAT HORLICKS HAS DONE THE TRICK

If your child picks at her food, looks pale and gets nervy, then it's time you started her on Horlicks. Horlicks soon brings the appetite back and changes paleness and listlessness into radiant vitality. Children love the flavour of Horlicks—especially when it's made with a Horlicks Mixer. Horlicks is priced at 1/6. Economy size, 2/9. Special Pack, with Mixer, 2/6.
HORLICKS
at bedtime guards children against "Night-Starvation".

Unrehearsed

DURING a country tour of Victoria by the late Dame Nellie Melba nearly thirty years ago, she greatly admired my mother's garden, which was a mass of blooms.

Next morning when the beloved diva was timed to depart, mother sent me to the station with a huge bunch of flowers. Into the midst of official farewells and handshakes I calmly marched with my bouquet. The civic leaders were indignant, but Melba smiled kindly, kissed me, and later sent me an autographed photograph of herself.

2/6 to Mrs. M. Kaye, 16th St., Mildura, Vic.

Lucky lurch

VISITING my parents on a farm in Wisconsin, U.S.A., during the haying season, I decided to help them by driving the horses attached to the wagon and hay-loader.

While seated on a plank behind the horses with my two-year-old son perched on my knees, the front left wheel struck a rock.

It looked as if I would be thrown between the horses, but gripping my little boy tightly with my left arm, I braced myself against the horse at the left.

Suddenly there was another bump and we were thrown. The horses took fright and lurched to the right and the wheels cleared us by inches. Neither of us received a scratch.

2/6 to Mrs. Ida L. Crooks, Vernon Ave., Eastlake, N.S.W.



Tangee gives natural, alluring beauty to lips

It's easy to make your lips reflect their natural loveliness. Tangee catches and holds a beauty that men admire. For Tangee can't give a painted look; it isn't paint. Orange in the stick, it changes on your lips to bluish rose, the shade most becoming to you. Its special cream base soothes and protects.

Try Tangee today. Then watch the glances of approval.



Aust. Agents, Turnleys, Melb. & Sydney.

No Asthma in 2 Years

Two years ago J. Richards, Hamilton, Ont., Canada, was in bed with Asthma. Had lost 40 pounds weight, suffered coughing, choking and strangling every night—couldn't sleep—expected to die. Mendaco stopped asthma first night and he has had none since—in OVER TWO YEARS. Mendaco is so successful it is guaranteed to give you free, easy breathing in 24 hours and to stop your Asthma completely in 8 days or money back on return of empty package.

Mendaco
Ends Asthma • Bronchitis • Hay Fever



BACKACHE

Only those who suffer can realise the utter misery, the maddening torture, the dreadful weakness that backache brings. Yet thousands of chronic sufferers go on in their pain and weakness until perhaps they have to give up, becoming bed-ridden; mother unable to carry out her daily duties; wage-earners lose money; pleasures just a thing of the past. Sufferers, you must realise that awful Backache is Nature's urgent signal of deep-seated trouble within the body—Kidney Trouble.

Weak kidneys—yes, that is what makes life a misery for so many, many people, although they do not know it. Are you going to stay crippled by pain, or will you prove how quickly, how surely and permanently, you can end your trouble by taking De Witt's Pills?

De Witt's Pills, in 24 hours, show you how they have acted directly on the

kidneys. If you will only persevere, their cleansing, tonic action will rid your system of the poisons and impurities that cause your pain.

Remember this. De Witt's Pills are made for the one purpose only—to end the pain and weakness caused by kidney trouble. They cleanse the system and build up health, strength and vitality. De Witt's Pills go to the seat of all your trouble—the Kidneys.

They are safe and sure in all cases of **RHEUMATISM BACKACHE JOINT PAINS LUMBAGO SCIATICA KIDNEY TROUBLE or any Urinary Irregularities**

Sold only in the white, blue and gold box. Be sure you ask for and see you get the genuine—

DE WITT'S KIDNEY and BLADDER PILLS

Made specially to end the pain of Rheumatism, Lumbago, Sciatica, Joint Pains and all forms of Kidney Trouble. Of all chemists and storekeepers, 1/6, 3/- and 5/6.

BUT he wasn't really alone. People were watching. He could feel their eyes peering through the curtains of the windows. They were glad to see him dusty and bruised and beaten. Because he had known all along that he was wicked. That was why they didn't come to the shop any more. He had struck Fraulein Adela who had been good to him.

He began to run. It wasn't a real run. It was more like a stumbling, shambling walk. It brought him across the fields to the river where there were thick clusters of young daffodils growing and willow trees in their first pale green. He fell on his knees and washed his face in the icy, swift-running water.

It was dark in the Laden zum Neusten Parlen when he got back. As no one came any more it was of no use to keep a light burning. In the back parlor his father and mother sat together, not working or reading, but very quiet, like people who wait for something that they know must happen.

"Was it a good day at school, Beni?"

"Yes, mother."

"You're so late."

"We drilled. And then afterwards we played by the river."

"Did you have a good time—playing?"

"Yes. It was great fun. But I cut my cheek."

That night there was a procession through the village. The Singverein was dressed in brown and the fire brigade carried a red banner with a twisted black cross in its white centre.

They sang as they came down the street. But as they passed the Laden zum Neusten Parlen Moden they stopped singing. And the silence was even more strange and frightening. A stone crashed through the window and scattered the dusty Neuligkeiten with broken glass. Through the shattered hole poured rough voices and the shrill, menacing scream of the women. The children's voices were like a flight of birds, small, sharp-toned birds.

Witches' Sabbath

"Beni the Beast—Beni the Beast—"

Beni looked up from his school books. He saw that his father and mother were trembling. He threw himself into his mother's arms. He stammered to her in an agony of shame and grief, "I will—I will be good."

The next morning the sun shone with such sparkling gaiety that yesterday seemed like a bad dream. Even the broken window couldn't be quite true. It must have been an accident. And, of course, you could be good—if you tried hard enough. At least you could prove to everyone that you hadn't meant to be bad. It was just not knowing what was wrong. Things that had been right weren't right any more. But if he explained to Fraulein Adela that he hadn't understood, she would forgive him. She couldn't have forgotten how pleased she had been about the silver medal, and that she had let him go to sleep against her shoulder.

He knew just how he would do it.

It was early yet. The cool spring sunshine played quietly by itself in the sleeping street. Everything looked so exactly as it had done when the Finkelbaums had been happy that Beni couldn't believe that he had ever wanted to kill people. He crept downstairs and through the sad, dusty little shop. So long as he was in the village street he walked sedately.

But once in the fields he began to run. His feet wanted to run. They wanted to dance and play. The daffodils loved the river. Fraulein Adela loved daffodils. Last year he had gathered a huge bunch for her—the tears had come into her eyes. She had said, "Thank you, Beni. That was dear of you."

When he gave them to her she would remember.

BUT it took longer than he had thought. Or he was so happy, running hither and thither through the lovely morning stillness, always tempted a little further by a flower that seemed just a little lovelier than the others, that he forgot. The school bell had rung for the last time when he ran panting into the empty playground and all the children were in their places. They looked at him when he came in, his hair and pinafore wet with dew and his arms full of the burning yellow flowers. But there were no friendly whisperings, no teasing nudges as he crept up the narrow aisle to where Fraulein Adela waited. He dared not really see her till the miracle had happened. He stood close to her and laid the flowers before her on the desk.

"For you," he said. A long time passed—a time of petrified stillness. Then through a clearing fog he saw his flowers. They were lying scattered on the floor. With one violent gesture she had flung them from her. Her voice shook. But he could hardly hear what she was saying—"effrontery—an insult—no good German—" Her eyes looked at him with something in them that was like a frightful paralyzing spell. He couldn't even run away.

"Wait," she said softly. Suddenly her manner changed—grew calm and deliberate. Her eyes were smiling. She laid her hand on his shoulder. "This is interesting. Sit down, Beni. Here—on my chair. So that everyone can see you. We were talking of races, children. I was telling you of the Ethiopians. Now here we have another race. I want you to notice all its characteristics so that you will always be able to recognise it and beware of it. Notice the shape of the head, children. That means cupidity and avarice. Look at the mouth. Those curves. Do you know what they mean? Lust and greed. Those eyes—brown like an animal's. Sit still, please, Beni. I haven't done yet. Dishonest, treacherous eyes. And this poor, mean body. You couldn't be a soldier with a body like that. A coward's body. You see, children, why people like Beni mustn't be allowed to live among us. They would poison us—"

He tried to escape from under her hands. A wild terror possessed him. But her hands were without mercy. Her voice grew shriller. Down there in the class-room were eyes—nothing but eyes staring in horror.

"You can go now, Beni—"

She had done with him. But he couldn't walk properly. His legs shook under him. Somehow he

reached his desk and cowered behind it. All around him rose a soft malignant whispering.

He knew now. It was no use trying to be good. He couldn't be. Nothing he did made any difference. Long, long before he was born it had been decided that Beni should be something horrible that good people should hate and shrink from. It was written in his hair, his eyes, his mouth, his body. No matter where he went all his life, it would be written there. Everyone would read it and turn away. All over the world.

All at once he grew quiet. It was as though he were flooded with a warm clear light. He was alone and everything was still about him.

Outside in the playground the children waited. They sharpened their fingers at him and screamed at him. But now he didn't seem to hear them any more. He let them punch and buffet him, standing very quietly in their midst, waiting till they grew tired of hurting him. Then when, one by one, they fell back silenced and quieted by his unresisting patience, he walked on to the school gates.

ERNA had stayed back in the schoolroom. She pretended that she was gathering her books together. But she heard the silence of Beni's going and looked up. And through the window she saw him for that one moment standing in the gateway. And suddenly she threw her books from her. She ran out into the playground.

"Where's Beni? Where's Beni?"

They shook their heads, staring at her with wide agnostic eyes. She stamped her foot at them. She didn't know what was the matter with her. She shouted at them. "Find Beni—find Beni—tell him it isn't true—they've been telling lies about him—"

The school bell rang overhead, calling them back. They paid no heed to it. Fraulein Adela, trampling the daffodils underfoot, ran to the window. She saw them rush the gates like a band of young, panic-stricken cattle.

They ran and ran. Through the meadows, in and out of the trees, calling to each other, calling "Beni—Beni, come back, Beni—" Their high young voices tore the silence with terror. The terror spread. It convulsed the world.

Erna ran by herself. She was swifter than the others. And it was as though she could see Beni—the shadow of Beni—running just ahead of her. It was the way they had gone so often.

It was harder to run now. The ground grew soggy round the river's edge. The rank grass rose almost to her knees. Her feet sank under her. She fell sobbing by the water's edge.

The water danced gaily round the bend. It carried with it the spring debris of fallen branches. It carried Beni with it. It brought him almost to her feet. She stumbled out into the water and caught him to her, dragging him up into her arms, holding him close to her with the strength of a grown, desperate woman.

The woods were quiet now. The children carried Beni in their midst. Four of the older and stronger boys carried him. Across a barrier of sunlight falling between the trees they faced the crowd of men and women. They stood still and looked at them with a grave contemplation as though they saw them clearly for the first time.

"Beni's dead," they whispered.

"Beni's dead—" Someone cried out. It was Fraulein Adela. She stumbled forward as though she wanted to break through the children and take Beni from them. But they would not let her. They stood firmly round him, defending him. And she fell on her knees, hiding her face in her arms, and cried.

They walked on. It wasn't easy. He was so small and so heavy. They passed the grown-up men and women with a strange aloofness as though they had become shadows that didn't mean anything. So that they shrank back. They couldn't touch the children. The children passed on into the full sunlight of the morning.

Frau Herz wrung her hands. "What have we done? What have we done to them? Who shall tell his father and mother? Ach, God forgive us—they were such good people—"

(Copyright).



Nobody's question because she's not alone

"SHE NEEDS A LONG-LASTING DEODORANT one that neither bath nor exercise can render ineffective..."

DOROTHY DIX (Intimate advice to millions of women)

YOU may think you do not perspire enough to matter, but every girl does. Even slight moisture may ruin a lovely dress,—will certainly destroy your charm.

Thousands of women rely on Liquid Odorono to safeguard their feminine appeal. Used and recommended by doctors, Odorono simply diverts underarm perspiration to other parts of the body where it may evaporate more freely. Easy to use, it scientifically controls perspiration moisture and odour.

ODO-RO-NO



RELAX TIRED MUSCLES

drive pain clean out!

When your joints and muscles are swollen and your muscles ache with rheumatism—don't dose yourself up and wait hopelessly. Get instant relief! Rub in St. Jacob's Oil. You feel its soothing glow on your skin as it goes quickly to work. You feel this soothing, penetrating oil sink deep into your muscles and joints. You actually feel it drawing out the pains and aches. Quick, glorious relief from Rheumatism, Sciatica, Neuritis, Lumbago and Neuralgia. St. Jacob's Oil does not burn the skin. Your chemist sells St. Jacob's Oil.

AFRAID of Your Thoughts?

Nerves are the Trouble

When you simply can't keep a grip on yourself, when you're afraid of your thoughts, worried, anxious, nervous, sleepless—take two NURSO tablets, crunch in the mouth and swallow. Almost at once you will feel the old confidence return. Your nerves will "steady" and you will sleep like a child. NURSO is a safe, harmless, sedative that gives natural sleep without drugs. It cannot form habits. All chemists sell NURSO, 2/6 for 20 tablets, or post free from Box 3725 SS, G.P.O., Sydney.

ECZEMA VANISHES—NEVER RETURNED
... sufferer from severe weeping eczema reports permanent disappearance of sores after short treatment with DEXMA. All chemists.

Fashion 6
Order Your Copy—NOW!

THE HOMEMAKER

September 23, 1939

The Australian Women's Weekly

First Page

Lead an active life — it's the

FINEST OF BEAUTY TONICS

KEEP your circulation going briskly with plenty of outdoor activity, games, exercises, facial massage. It will keep you young and guard your looks . . . will help keep you in good health, too.

By . . . JANETTE

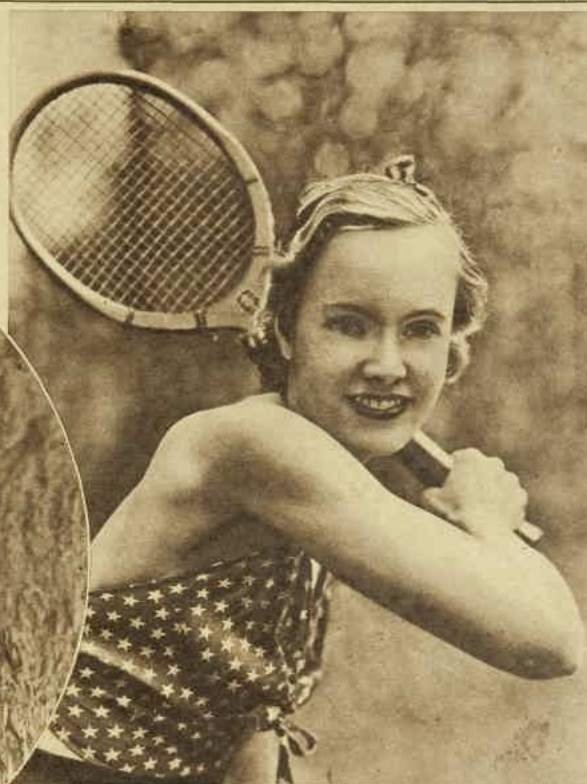
HAVE you noticed you are better-looking at some times of the year, in summer, for instance, than at others? Eyes brighter, skin more glowing, lips redder? More "pre-looking"?

Have you wondered why? It's circulation, probably. And don't you see that you ought to put it to work for you the year round, to keep yourself looking like that?

All your diets and cosmetics work better if you keep your circula-



SUITABLY CLAD for walking, Lucille Ball, RKO star, likes nothing better than a ramble through the fields by way of light pleasant exercise.



SHE'S A TENNIS ENTHUSIAST who wouldn't miss her bi-weekly game for anything. But she also knows that the exercise it gives her helps to keep her young, radiant, and brimful of good health.



IT'S A PRETTY PLAY-SUIT, isn't it? Anne Shirley, RKO, wears it at home so she can get out into the garden and play games, like a healthy, eager child.

Exercise does it. Even if you don't especially enjoy sports, you ought to make yourself enter into them, because of the fundamental good such activity does to you and your looks.

Join your children on hikes. Do your marketing on foot, or on a bicycle. Go skating. Take up tap-dancing or house painting or rock gardening—anything that uses arms and legs and back and waistline muscles to force active circulation into ageing tissues.

It is lazy muscles that grow old, not busy working ones.

There are all kinds of tricks to keep circulation going briskly. Use them all. Heat does it.

That's why a hot-water bottle or electric pad makes the skin pink, eases congested muscles and taut nerves.

Renews Complexion

A HOT bath is good for circulation, brings the blood in a rush to the surface, makes your skin all red and warm. That flush of blood cleanses and renews your complexion as nothing else can do.

Quick changes of temperature give impetus to circulation. A warm bath followed by a cold shower will shock the blood stream into activity.

It is your extremities that suffer most from poor circulation, the outer tips of the blood channels where the stream slows down most.

It is the skin of your face that looks wan and sallow when circulation is laggard. And your scalp that grows dry and tight when its blood supply dwindles.

Forcing or coaxing the blood into the surface tissues of neck and face and scalp is the basis of every scientific beauty treatment.

The same principle underlies the suggestion of a hair specialist who recommends that you stand with your feet apart, body bent far forward at the waist, head hanging down between your knees, while you brush your hair. Looks lunatic, but is marvellous for your scalp and hair.



Let me show you how to "DAMP-SET" your hair with VELMOL

HOLLYWOOD and the movies were quick to use this "damp-set" idea . . . it's the discovery of a famous consultant to New York, London, and Paris beauty-salons . . .

Now, Velmol makes it so easy—so simple—that you can "damp-set" your own hair, at home . . . yourself!

FIRST: Run a wet comb through your hair to damp it.

NEXT: Moisten your brush with a few drops of Velmol and brush evenly through the length of your hair.

NOW: Set the waves or curls in your hair with fingers and comb—That's all! (Holds a finger wave for days!)

Yes, definitely, "Damp-setting" with Velmol has come to stay . . . It saves time . . . temper . . . and money, too. A 2/- bottle lasts for months. Ask for Velmol at your chemist, store or hairdresser.

going round and round briskly underneath.

Circulation does two things that contribute enormously to good looks and vitality. It brings fresh food and energising oxygen to every cell of your body.

And it carries away from every cell and tissue the accumulated wastes that are a drag on its activity, that choke its functioning and dull its bloom.

In much the same manner as a space, your body burns up food and fresh air to keep alive, to work, to replace worn parts. It is a complicated system, but a splendidly provided the blood keeps on its way as a carrier of food, oxygen, and wastes.

When the blood stream lags, your supplies lazily to the tissues, you are indolent about carrying wastes away, your fire of youth burns lower and lower. You feel sluggish, tired. And you look it.

In summer you are more active. You swim, hike, camp, golf, ride, garden. Even if you don't conscientiously do regular exercises, you do things that make arms and legs and waist muscles work.

You are active, and so you activate your blood stream. Jumping around a tennis court, pushing a lawn mower both make you red-faced and hot because they both use up physical energy, and so create a demand in your muscles for new supplies of food-fuel and oxygen.

The blood speeds to carry the supplies round and round. And you feel fine, look glowing.

Ever fresh supplies of nourishment, fresh impetus of energising oxygen, quick removal of functional wastes—these keep tissues young, cheeks firm, eyes bright, hair strong and shining. A busy blood stream is a marvellous beauty tonic.

How can you put it to work, to keep you young in health and looks?

You should plant some . . .

HYDRANGEAS this YEAR

FOR sheer brilliance and longevity plus generosity of bloom few flowering shrubs can equal or excel the hydrangea.

In the warmer districts of the Commonwealth the first big heads of bloom appear in October, lasting, if the weather is not very hot and blustery, until well into January.

Rooted plants of this lovely shrub may be set out in the garden now, and if planted where the fierce afternoon sunshine misses them will provide the flower lover with a good display this year.

A south-easterly position that is touched by the morning sun is ideal, but wind-swept situations should at all times be avoided.

—Says THE OLD GARDENER.

OF all shrubs grown by novices, the hydrangea is probably the least understood and probably the most maligned or libelled.

It is one of the few shrubs known to botanists that change the color of their flowers, or bracts, according to the nature of the soil in which they are grown.

For this reason the uninitiated condemn the nurseryman when a hydrangea that has borne blue flowers the first year develops pink ones the following year, or vice versa.

The blame, if it can be termed so, is attributable entirely to the soil content.

By this I mean, if the soil is alkaline and a blue-flowered hydrangea

is planted in it, the flowers the following year are almost certain to turn pink.

If the soil is acid, a pink-flowered hydrangea will turn blue in course of time, or some of the flowers will be pink and others blue.

Much depends upon whether the soil is very alkaline or very acid.

From this it may be deduced that the gardener can change the colors at will. Lime, either slaked or hydrated, will make the soil alkaline and turn the flowers a nice pink.

Oxide of iron, alum, or iron filings dug in round the plants will turn the flowers blue.

In the case of white hydrangeas it can be said that the flowers rarely change color until just before they die, when they mostly turn green, or pale pink, or blue.

Red hydrangeas must be treated regularly with slaked or hydrated lime if the deep color is to be retained, otherwise they will turn blue if the soil becomes acid.

A lovely shade of deep mauve or purple can be obtained with red

hydrangeas if oxide of iron or salts of aluminium are applied.

Pruning is also misunderstood, and many gardening writers advise winter treatment, although this is wrong in practice.

Hydrangeas develop their flowering wood immediately the flush of bloom ends, and winter pruning robs them of most of the big floral heads.

That is why I always recommend summer pruning.

If the late summer weeks prove to be very wet the shrubs frequently



ONE OF the lovely blue hydrangeas, showing large, profuse blooms. Decorative in the garden, hydrangeas can be utilised inside the house if the stems are crushed at the ends and plunged into boiling water before putting the blooms in cold water in the vase.

develop a few masses of buds, but I always remove them before they flower.

Hydrangeas are shallow-rooting shrubs, and should never be allowed to thirst during flowering time.

Well-decayed manure should be applied all round the roots now, and any leaf mould, rich black soil, or rotted compost that can be spared will add much to the size of the blooms later on.

Among the choicest hydrangeas to plant now is the waxy variety, *Ajaisai*. This can be obtained in two types, one bearing green leaves, and the other variegated.

Avalanche is one of the best whites, the tips or flowers frequently measuring two inches across (according to the richness of the soil).

Liebling, which is also known to nurserymen as *My Darling*, is a rich red, with tips about the same size as *Avalanche*.

Fine cream

DOMATOI is a double variety, and innocence a fine cream.

Other reds that can be recommended are *Parvial*, *Prince Henry*, *Elmar*, and *Rubis*.

The varieties that turn either pink or blue are *Lancelot*, *Marechal Foch*, *Vicomte de Vibraye*, *Amarante*, *Attraction*, and the common *Hortensis*.

For cool districts of fair altitude, hydrangea paniculata can be recommended, but it does not do well in warm areas.

Young side-shoots taken from the middle of the plant in springtime

will strike very quickly, and if afforded a shady spot in a south-easterly position should bloom next autumn.

The bush-house is an ideal spot for raising cuttings in pots. The soil should contain some old turf or peat, sand, and a little leaf mould, and if kept moist the half-ripened wood will soon develop roots.

For next season

BUDS can also be removed from the shrubs during springtime and converted into useful plants for next season.

The wood should be cut away with the bud intact, leaving about two inches of wood on each side of the bud.

Split the wood down the centre with a sharp penknife and carefully remove all the pith except that immediately below the bud.

Place the bud in a pot filled with the soil previously described, and cover all except the bud itself with leaf mould.

Keep moist, and when the bud strikes out on its own and is big enough to handle remove to a bigger pot if well rooted.

For indoor use hydrangea blooms should be cut on very long stems. The ends of the stems should be bruised and broken, plunged into boiling water for a few minutes and then put into cold.

The water in vases should be changed every day. Better still, remove the blooms from the vase and plunge stems into boiling water every day.

YOU GET ON His NERVES, TOO!

Poor Kid! He's Sick and Troubled! Needs Your Help to Make Him Well.

USUALLY, he's such a cheerful little fellow. Bright and smiling and happy. But—somehow or other—something has "gone wrong". He has fallen a victim of Faulty Elimination.

Faulty Elimination (incomplete bowel action) is one of the most troublesome of all childhood complaints. It means that the vital organs are only partially completing their natural function, and are leaving in the system that dangerous food waste which poisons the blood-stream and brings ill-health in its wake, thus wreaking untold damage to the child's nervous and physical system.

At Some Time, 95 Children Out of Every 100 are Subject to

Faulty Elimination



LAXETTE MANUFACTURING CO.
366 Swanton St., Melbourne, C.I.

Faulty Elimination is all the more worrying because it is so likely to be overlooked. Fortunately there is the remedy close at hand in Laxettes, the chocolate aperient which kiddies love to take. Blended into their smooth delicious chocolate is the one safe medicament that gently stimulates normal and complete bowel action. There is no gripping—no purging, for Laxettes are perfectly gentle in their action. And there are no failures, for Laxettes are as certain as they are safe.

Genuine Laxettes—which are sold only in tins—are the standard medicinal aid in thousands of homes throughout Australia. So try a tin. Sold and recommended by all chemists and storekeepers in two handy sizes at 1/6 and 6d.

LAXETTES

CORRECT Faulty Elimination



Fuchsias need attention now

DURING the next few months fuchsias will be making rapid growth, so they need attention right away.

The plants should have been well pruned during winter and rested almost entirely.

Like most shade-loving plants they refuse to do their best if placed right out in the open where the sun will scorch and burn their tender wood.

At this time of the year some well-decayed manure should be placed round the roots. No manure is necessary at any other time.

If grown in pots or tubs, the soil should be well drained by placing broken crocks at the bottom, or a good layer of coarse cinders.

During the growing period they must receive ample water, but the foliage should not be sprayed more than necessary.

Thrips and aphides attack fuchsias, and may be controlled by regular spraying with nicotine sulphate.

Old favorites can be propagated during spring by taking cuttings of new growth or old wood that did not flower last autumn.

These should be inserted in pots of sandy loam and kept in the bush-house until they have rooted.

They should then be re-potted and planted out in the garden in a south-easterly position until they harden off and become established.

Don't take risks with WHOOPING-COUGH

I WANT to talk to you about Betty, doctor, my youngest, you remember. She's very upset because I won't let her play with Mary Hastings, the child next door who has whooping-cough.

Whooping-cough? That's a nasty complaint.

Yes, but Mrs. Hastings told me I was making an absurd fuss and the sooner Betty had whooping-cough and got it over the better.

Don't you believe it, Mrs. Manning. Whooping-cough is not something to "get over young." It is a very contagious and dangerous disease, and can prove serious—usually through complications that ensue or diseases that follow immediately after it.

Goodness, doctor! I didn't know that. Thank heaven I did keep Betty away from Mary Hastings then.

Yes, indeed, Mrs. Manning. The most important thing to do to prevent a child catching whooping-cough is to keep him (or in this case, her) away from other children with the disease.

It may be caught either from the

children themselves or anything they have handled, you know. How old is Betty now?

Not quite five, doctor.

That is actually the most susceptible period—between twelve months and five years. After the age of five years the older the child the less the chance of catching it.

How can you tell if a child is getting whooping-cough, doctor?

It is rather difficult to recognise at first, Mrs. Manning. As a rule the child just shows the usual signs of a cold and has, more or less, a cough. This stage lasts anything from four days to two or three weeks.

The cough gets worse and occurs in spells, especially at night, and then the tell-tale "whoop" is heard.

It is most distressing, that "whoop," isn't it? Poor Mary, she coughs and coughs at night. She seems to give a number of short coughs and then the long "whoop."

It is certainly a very unpleasant illness. During the second stage, the attacks vary in number during the 24 hours, but they are usually most frequent and severe at night. Each attack causes a great deal



—Posed by the Dionne "Quins"

"HOW TO BEHAVE" SERIES

● **ATTENTION, PLEASE**—it is rude to seem indifferent when somebody is doing us a favor . . . My goodness, Annette does seem to be letting her attention wander while Nurse O'Shaughnessy is reading to her. But she isn't really being rude. She's just showing you how badly it looks. Yvonne stands close to the nurse paying polite attention to the story.



NERVOUS HABITS in young children—this child has the dangerous habit of putting matches and other small articles in his mouth—are often formed in babyhood. The wise mother watches her young baby and prevents him from acquiring bad habits.

For young wives and mothers

TRUBY KING SYSTEM

The Problem of Various Nervous Habits

"PREVENTION is better than cure" is never so true as when it comes to dealing with bad habits in babies and children.

A bad habit is so quickly, so insidiously, and so easily formed that every mother should be on the watch to prevent these habits from becoming formed and established. To break them later in babyhood and early childhood is often extremely difficult.

There is also the possibility of them recurring in later life.

Hence the supreme importance of forming a baby's character and habits on the right lines from the

start, and checking any departure from the normal immediately.

Thumb-sucking, nail-biting, etc., and other nervous habits can be avoided if wise treatment at the beginning is promptly carried out.

A free leaflet on this subject has been prepared by The Australian Women's Weekly Mothercraft Service Bureau. Readers interested may obtain a copy of this leaflet free of cost by sending a request together with a stamped addressed envelope for reply to The Australian Women's Weekly, Box 4299YY, G.P.O., Sydney.

Endorse your envelope "Mothercraft."

of suffering and the child will try hard to stave one off. Fortunately one can usually sleep between them.

Is there a further stage?

Yes, Mrs. Manning. After a while the attacks become fewer and fewer until they finally cease, though sometimes the cough persists through sheer habit.

In fact, the best thing is to let the doctor give the patient a medical check-up three months later just to be on the safe side.

I see, doctor. But tell me, isn't there anything one can do for a child with whooping-cough?

I'm afraid there isn't very much we can do. But the child should be given plenty of light, nourishing food, particularly eggs and milk, and should have heaps of fresh air night and day.

The best place on sunny days for children with whooping-cough is the garden—although they must, of course, be kept away from other children. And they must not be allowed to become over-tired.

Constant care

WHAT so many people fail to realise is that a child with whooping-cough is a very sick child, in need of constant care for months to come.

Do you think a vaccine is worth giving, doctor?

Well, we had great hopes of vaccine treatment about ten years ago, but a long trial has left us rather in doubt whether it is worth while.

My own feeling is that a well-nourished child will stand up well, and whooping-cough is one of those children's diseases that really test out whether a mother has been feeding her child according to the modern standards—you know, a pint of milk a day, fruit, meat, cheese, egg, lettuce salads and wholemeal bread and butter.

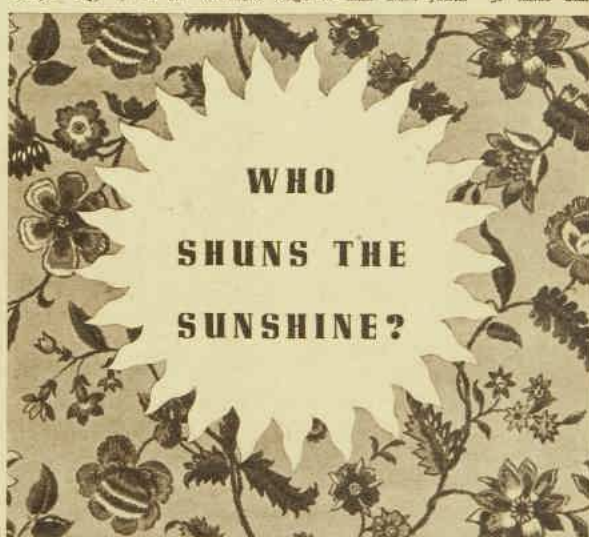
If the child has been allowed to eat too many cakes, biscuits, sweets, jam, honey and sugar, his whole resistance will be undermined.

Betty has had all the good foods you mention, doctor.

I am glad to hear that. But if she does catch whooping-cough, the main principle of management is to keep up her strength. She must have plenty of nourishing food despite the effects of coughing and also plenty of rest at night. When necessary, we prescribe a sedative.

Another thing—after children have recovered from whooping-cough, send them away, if possible, for a holiday. Into the mountains, in the country, for preference, where the bracing air will help to build up their strength and appetites, and where they can satisfy those healthy appetites with plenty of fresh milk, eggs, vegetables and fruit.

57269: Copy of an old needlework design in linen union fabric. 31 inches wide.



WHO SHUNS THE SUNSHINE?

You may not realise that there are still people who pull the blinds at the first sign of a sunbeam. 'You've no idea,' they say, 'what a lot of harm it does the curtains, cushions and covers.' Harm indeed! There's harm only in shutting out the light and sunshine when it's not a bit necessary—when you can buy Sanderson Indecolor Fabrics, fast as

fast to sun and washing, at such moderate prices. Yes, and choose from the comprehensive range of the loveliest furnishing fabrics in the world.

Sanderson Indecolor range includes reversible woven fabrics, cretonne, linen and linen union, glazed chintz and the new lustrous-finish washable chintz called 'Sanderlin', all guaranteed sun-resisting and washproof.

They are sold by leading furnishing stores.

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SUN-RESISTING & WASHPROOF
FABRICS

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Thrilling Clothes *for* Summer!

IN THE GREATEST, MOST COLORFUL
ISSUE OF "FASHION" EVER PUBLISHED!

64 PAGES

27 OF THEM IN GLORIOUS COLOR

October, prelude to glorious Summer, turns every woman's fancy to thoughts of new, and gay, and colourful things to wear for work and play. So FASHION presents a truly magnificent issue packed with Summer style news.

FASHION'S Editors have scoured the Continent and America, selected the most exciting variety of new Summer clothes which have the approval of the world's leading designers—and now present these fashions adapted perfectly to the needs of every Australian woman.

NEARLY 100 PATTERNS ARE AVAILABLE for children, girls, young women, matrons, and stout or older women. Patterns are in several sizes at only 1/1 each (10d. for children's patterns). And, remember, you receive free the four lovely sports patterns shown on this page.

SEE IT BEFORE YOU BUY

Ask your newsagent NOW to reserve FASHION'S Summer Number specially for you. Or look through it at your newsagent's. Turn the pages—study it before you buy—see what a wealth of wonderful style news and money-saving hints it gives you for only sixpence. Then you'll want to buy FASHION regularly *every* month.

FREE
These 4 Charming
**SPORTS GIRL
PATTERNS**

SIXPENCE SPENT ON "Fashion"



Day and Night, Sports, Beach and Holidaywear..

"Fashion" Summer Styles Number

Gay new beach fashions, sports clothes and leisure wear—a wonderful variety of smart new frocks for day and evening wear — new housecoats, linen wear, blouses, lingerie, children's beach wear, too!

Here is a veritable encyclopedia of style news to help you plan your complete Summer wardrobe.

And, in addition, there are new hair-do's, needlework, fiction, cooking hints, etc.

Be sure you reserve **your** special copy of FASHION Summer Styles Issue NOW at your newsagent's.

On Sale
WEDNESDAY
SEPT 27th.



In beautiful colour photographs like these, FASHION shows you a marvellous selection of smart, new beach and sports wear.

SAVES YOU POUNDS ON CLOTHES!

For a friendly
conversational air . . .

GROUP your FURNITURE

DON'T arrange the chairs in your living-room in a stiff manner around the four walls as if to show the furniture itself off. Group your various pieces and your room will take on a delightful air of friendly charm.

BY OUR HOME DECORATOR



HERE IS A LIVING-ROOM grouping of furniture which is not only attractive in a large room, but is also suitable for a small lounge-room when there is no fireplace. Here couch, side tables with lamps, lounge chairs and coffee table are arranged beneath a large mirror on the wall which reflects light from a window opposite.



THREE BIG WINDOWS reaching almost to the floor provide a background for this group, which includes a settee and matching lounge chairs with twin tables, lamps, and a centre coffee table.



CORNER DIVANS comfortably upholstered and strewn with cushions are popular on the Continent. Here the wall at one end is completely covered with mirror to give a sense of greater space.

IN the very small intimate lounge-room it is usually best to arrange the furniture casually around the room.

But in the large living-room chairs arranged starkly around the walls only result in people having to talk to each other across the room—a chilling, uninviting idea if ever there was one—an idea, too, guaranteed to cause conversation to lag very quickly and the quieter guests to sink into temporary oblivion.

The larger the room the more essential it is to arrange the furniture in intimate groups. This should not be difficult because in most rooms certain permanent objects provide focusing points for suitable grouping.

The most obvious is the fireplace, which in winter attracts around it the most inviting lounge furniture in the room and the occupants of the room as well.

Another group may be arranged at the window, to gather sunshine in winter and cool breezes in summer.

The bigger the room, of course, the greater your opportunity of forming intimate groups of furniture—rooms within a room, as it were.

And there's nothing like this clever arranging of furniture in the large living-room to give it an inviting atmosphere.

For instance, you may have an attractive bookcase, always an attraction to the eye and spirit. You could make it a focusing point of a group of easy chairs, so that having been attracted there by the friendly beckoning rows of books people are tempted to stay awhile.

A small table to hold ashtray, cigarette-box, cup or glass might conveniently stand here too.

And to complete the picture of cultured ease a reading-lamp could be set on the bookcase top or a standard lamp added to the group.

14 COLORS
Three new ones —
especially for linos
and interior floors—
Kanimbla Blue, Cigar
Brown, Grotto Green.

Solpah

your
verandah floor

Taubmans Solpah Paving Paint gives a gleaming finish that's as hard as iron. Solpah any wood or cement surface. Solpah re-colors linoleum and makes it like new. Ask for Taubmans Solpah wherever paint is sold.

FREE Anne Stewart, 75 Mary Street, St. Peters, Sydney.
Please send me your NEW BOOK ON KITCHENS—packed with color schemes for everything from kitchen walls and doors to canisters and chairs. I enclose 2d. in stamps to cover cost of postage and handling.

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____ A6.

One way to shut off such a bookcase grouping is to place a couch at right angles to the wall or facing the bookcase. The broad back of the couch provides an excellent barrier, and this device of setting a couch boldly out into the room can be used freely to effect divisions.

Perhaps, however, such a barrier in some rooms might prove too assertive.

And so in order to ease the severity of the dividing line a low bookcase can be placed against the back of the couch; besides forming a link with the rest of the room, this bookcase will afford an appropriate stand for a lamp to illuminate the area bounded by the couch.

Good planning

ANOTHER piece of furniture admirably suited to this back-to-back arrangement with a couch is a writing-table. Then the lamp which illuminates the table illuminates also the couch, and you have an example of the kind of economy that is the soul of good planning.

Patterned rugs spread on a polished floor or on plain felt or body-carpet serve excellently to hold groups of furniture together.

Another pleasing device, much in favor in Europe, consists of a fixed bench, built for preference in a corner. Such a bench, especially if comfortably upholstered and strewn with cushions, draws about itself various other items of furniture. The most obvious thing is to place a table before it or within the angle of its two arms. The table will attract chairs, and so automatically there will come into being a delightful corner for afternoon tea and such other special occasions, and for reading and writing.

Now! Pond's Hand Lotion with the active "SKIN-VITAMIN"

MAKES Hands Softer

POND'S cream LOTION for the hands

No matter how busy you are all day, you can keep your hands soft, smooth, youthful with Pond's Hand Lotion containing the "skin-vitamin," vitamin A, which is essential to skin health and beauty. Housework, weather, and washing are constantly removing this "skin-vitamin" from hands. Now you can restore it with Pond's!

Only 1/- a bottle at all stores and chemists.

Use Pond's every time you wash your hands.

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In convalescence after any illness the most vital need is nourishment, and to supply this need, there is nothing so good as Roboleine. Because Roboleine is more than a tonic; it is a well-balanced food in a delicious form (containing the Vitamins A, B, C, D) which rapidly converts the impoverished blood into a rich red flow to nourish and revitalize the nerves and tissues. Buy a jar of Roboleine to-day, it will prove the best health investment you ever made. Even after a few doses the beneficial effects are noticeable, the appetite increases, the digestion improves, and soon the symptoms of weakness are replaced by a joyous feeling of returning strength. Recommended by Doctors for over 40 years in Anaemia, Rickets, Malnutrition, and in Convalescence, following Influenza, Measles, etc. It is the best preparation of its kind for young and old.

Made in England
In 6oz., 12oz. and 36oz. glass jars.

ROBOLEINE THE BODY BUILDER AND REVITALISING TONIC

SAMPLE COUPON
Mail to: Roboleine Pty. Ltd., 478 Kent Street, Sydney, or Southern Cross Bldg., 100 St. George St., Auckland, N.Z. I enclose 5d. in stamp for sample of Roboleine.
Name: _____
Address: _____

In Seven Days Fiery, Itching Skin Gets Sure Relief

Here is a surgeon's wonderful prescription now dispensed by chemists at trifling cost, that will do more toward helping you get rid of unsightly spots from skin diseases than anything you've ever used.

Not only is this great oil anti-septic, but it promotes rapid and healthy healing in eczema spots and sores. The itching of Eczema is instantly stopped; the eruptions dry up and scale off in a very few days. The same is true of barber's itch, salt rheum, and other skin eruptions and inflammation.

You can obtain Moone's Emerald Oil in the original bottle at any modern chemist. It is safe to use, and failure in any of the ailments noted above is rare indeed.

One of England's ... MODERN HOMES

• An example of the style of architecture gaining great popularity in the mother country.



ABOVE: A long-distance view of the house, showing the general design, which is a composition of square and circular members.

LEFT: This view shows the terraces and trees in the background. Notice the semi-circular loggia which is used for open-air meals.



A CLOSE-UP of the house with the rectangular blue-tiled swimming pool in the foreground. This is surrounded by green lawns with a terrace beyond leading from the house.

THE house is built on a hilltop, with a magnificent view looking southwards over the Sussex Wold, and has been designed so that open-air living can be enjoyed as much as possible.

Built on a terrace retained by whitewashed concrete walls, the exterior is rendered over brick, in white cement and carborum electrically polished.

A glassed-in spiral staircase is the main feature of the entrance, which faces north.

To the left of this the servants' wing curves back towards the north, so that the windows do not overlook the front terrace. The entrance door of verdigris-copper is flanked by gazelles in the same color.

Inside, the designing is simple but dignified, and in harmony with the exterior. Absence of unnecessary detail gives a feeling of restfulness.

All the principal rooms face south, the sunny side, and are well supplied with windows from which to enjoy the view.

But the full beauty of the panorama is reserved until you walk out upon the terrace, where it unfolds before you.

Bedrooms are of modest proportions, and are simply furnished, with enclosed washing recess and built-in cupboards. Each suite opens on to a sun terrace.

On the south side of the house there is an external stairway which enables you to walk straight out of your bedroom on to a terrace and down steps to the garden. Or you may be on your way to a meal which, weather permitting, will be served in the delightful semi-circular loggia which opens off the dining-room.

Afterwards you will retire to the long, low loggia at the extreme west end which faces on to the terrace and overlooks a rectangular blue-tiled swimming-pool. This loggia is cool and comfortable and supplied with cane furniture and lounge chairs, while for those who feel energetic there is a ping-pong table.

Immediately surrounding the house the garden is formally laid out, but below the terrace formality disappears. There are flower-beds in a profusion of color, a rhododendron walk, and a wood where wild-flowers grow, fairy grottoes and hidden pools where water-lilies bloom.

Get More Security For FALSE TEETH Loosened by Shrinking Gums



The illustration shows how shrinking gums cause a dental plate to become loose by depriving it of the firm, even foundation it needs. Have your dentist re-adapt your plate to changed gums. And until your dentist has made this change you can use and count on FASTERTH to give valuable daily aid in holding a wobbly plate more securely. FASTERTH, sprinkled on your plate, forms a thin, retentive seal between plate and gums that helps you eat, talk and laugh with greater confidence. Helps safeguard your public appearance from the annoyance and embarrassment of a loose plate. Being mildly alkaline (non-acid) FASTERTH checks gum soreness or burning due to chafing of a loose plate or excessive acid mouth. No oily, sticky taste or feeling. Get FASTERTH to-day from any chemist, and enjoy ease and confidence of a more securely held plate.

Any dental plate held tighter by FASTERTH leads to better eating enjoyment and social pleasure.

ORIGINAL ALKALINE PLATE POWDER

How I Got Rid Of SUPERFLUOUS HAIR for ever!

By a TRAINED NURSE

"MY arms and legs were covered with ugly, thick dark hair. I tried everything—irritating pastes, smelly powders, even painful electric treatments. Using a razor only made the hair grow faster and coarser. Then a friend told me about the New 'VEET.' It removed every trace of hair in three minutes. Left my skin white and smooth as velvet. With New 'VEET' any superfluous hair troubles are solved." Note: New 'VEET' gently dissolves away hair below the skin surface—therefore leaves no britchy stubble like the razor—and it actually retards hair growth. 2/6 and 4/- (double size), at all Chemists and Stores.



Giving children harsh laxatives is unkind . . . and harmful



Here's a Special Child's Preparation—PLEASANT and MILD

When your youngster is out-of-sorts—obviously in need of a thorough intestinal cleansing—and still "fights" taking a laxative, don't set it down as stubbornness. Maybe you are guilty—of thoughtlessness. For when a child objects to such medicine, there's often good cause. The taste may be offensive or the action harsh and unpleasant.

So is it ever fair, or even kind, to force such remedies on your youngster, thus taxing his upset condition still further?

Fortunately, there's no need to resort to such measures. You can get a real child's laxative, "California Syrup of Figs," made primarily for children—and thoroughly pleasant both in taste and action.

In flavour, "California Syrup of Figs"—"Calfig"—is as delicious as pure fruit syrup. And, because of its gentle vegetable ingredients, is mild and agreeable in effect. Doctors recommend it. And in thousands of homes where it is used, "California Syrup of Figs" has proved an equally suitable laxative for others in the family—either young or old, especially for women—with whom it is important to avoid the shock of stronger, harsher drugs.

"California Syrup of Figs" is sold by all chemists and stores, 1/6 or 2/- times the quantity for 2/10. Be sure to say "California" and look for "Calfig" on the package.



PILES DISAPPEAR without Operation

Shrinks and Heals Piles, often in 5 days

THE primary cause of haemorrhoids is internal . . . stagnation of blood in the lower bowel. . . Acting on this basis, Dr. J. S. Leonhardt, the specialist in rectal troubles, first tested his internal method of treatment on 1,000 patients with complete success in 980 cases! Now Dr. Leonhardt states that any pile sufferer may expect definite relief, beginning in 24 hours, simply by taking these pleasant tablets.

Vaculoid tablets, within 24 hours, begin to restore a normal, healthy, strong blood circulation through flabby, relaxed veins. Bleeding quickly stops—while broken, bloated blood vessels start to shrink and heal in about 4 or 5 days.

Many report that even in cases where an operation seemed the only hope, the use of Vaculoid tablets has led to complete and lasting relief!

Don't delay any longer. Relief comes so quickly, you will wonder why you did not resort to this simple, pleasant method long ago!

VACULOID

4/- All Chemists

CLINTON-WILLIAMS PTY. LTD



STAINS ON FALSE TEETH GONE!

"My false teeth were stained black; after using Steradent four or five times, plates are natural colour, teeth pearly white."
Mrs. A.G. New Southgate, N.12.



It is easy to use 'Steradent.' Fill the cap of the tin with 'Steradent' and pour the powder into a glass containing sufficient warm water (not hot) to cover the dentures. Stir well. Put in your dentures and leave them while you dress, or overnight. Take them out and rinse thoroughly under the tap. Then your teeth and plates are clean—clean where the brush can't reach. Dull teeth gleam white again. Plates regain their natural colour. 'Steradent' is guaranteed harmless to dental materials. Sold by all chemists. Price 2/-. Double size 3/6.

You are safe with 'Steradent.' It is highly recommended by the Dental profession.

BRICKITT'S (OVERSEA) LTD.
(Pharmaceutical Dept.), Sydney.

Steradent
cleans and sterilizes false teeth

HAPPY RELIEF FROM PAINFUL BACKACHE

Caused by Tired Kidneys

Many of those gnawing, nagging, painful backaches people blame on colds or strains are often caused by tired kidneys—and can be relieved when treated in the right way.

The kidneys are one of Nature's chief ways of taking acids and wastes out of the blood. A healthy person should pass about 3 pints a day and so get rid of more than 3 pounds of waste matter.

If the 15 miles of kidney tubes and filters don't work well, this poisonous waste stays in the body. It may start nagging backaches, leg pains, loss of pep and energy, getting up nights, limping, swollen feet and ankles, puffiness under the eyes, rheumatic pains and dizziness. Don't let it lay you up.

Ask your chemist for DOAN'S BACKACHE KIDNEY PILLS. . . used successfully the world over by millions of people. They give quick relief and will help to flush out the 15 miles of kidney tubes. So be sure you get DOAN'S BACKACHE KIDNEY PILLS.

Knit yourself this smart SWIM SUIT

● It's made in red and white wool, and if you get busy now you'll have it made in time for the start of summer swimming.

THIS swim suit is designed to fit 32 to 34-inch bust. If you want it in a larger size, use needles one size larger.

The suit is made with a detachable skirt in white wool with a brassiere top and waistband in red.

Here are the instructions:

Materials: 5oz. "Ramada" super fingering wool, 4-ply, white. 3oz. "Ramada" super fingering wool, 4-ply, red. 3oz. extra white with skirt. A pair of No. 10 knitting needles.

Measurements: To fit size 32 to 34-inch bust. For a larger size use needles one size larger.

Tension: About 8 stitches and 12 rows to one inch.

Abbreviations: K, knit; p, purl; sts., stitches; tog., together; inc., increase (by working twice into the same stitch); dec., decrease (by taking two stitches together); ins., inches.

FRONT

Using white wool, cast on 121 sts. Begin pattern straight away.

1st Row: * K 1, bring wool forward and slip next st. purlwise, wool back. Repeat from * to end.

2nd Row: Purl, inc. 1st both ends of row.

3rd Row: As first row, but k centre 3 sts. tog. Repeat last 2 rows until work measures 19 inches along increased edge. Now shape to form two V's in which brassiere fits: Cast off 35 sts. at the beginning of each of next 2 rows.

Continue in pattern on the remaining sts., but do not inc. at beginning and end of purl rows. When one st. remains fasten off.

BACK

Cast on 141 sts. and work as for front for 12 ins. Now slightly shape



THIS ATTRACTIVE swimming suit is knitted in red and white wool, and has a detachable skirt. Instructions for making are given on this page.

sides by omitting to inc. each end of next and every 3rd purl row (i.e., every 6th row of knitting). When work measures a bare 19 inches, cast off. This cast off edge forms V of back.

BRASSIERE

This is made in two pieces, both alike. Using red wool, cast on 71 sts. and work in k 1, p 1 rib, always working into the back of the knit stitches. In every alternate row take the centre 3 sts. tog. Work thus until 9 stitches remain.

Continue on these sts. for 36 ins. (or 12 yards if you wish straps to come round to front of waist to tie). Point end of strap by dec. on one edge only until 1 remains. Fasten off. Work second half of brassiere to match.

Uneven Knitting

UNEVEN stitches in a knitted garment are a very common fault. This is caused more often than not by putting work down when only part of a row has been worked. Remedy: Work to end of row always before laying work aside.

Another cause is loose knitting. You will soon see if you are allowing wool too much rein. Do not suddenly tug the wool when you do recognise this fault, or you will get an uneven patch. Practise on a spare piece of knitting until your tension is right, and then tackle a real job.

SIDE SEAM STRAPS (2 ALIKE)

Using red wool cast on 9 sts. and work to match brassiere straps. When work measures 17 inches, shape ends as before to point by dec. both ends of every row until 1 remains. Fasten off.

SKIRT

Using white wool commence at lower edge, casting on 120 sts. Work in same pattern as suit but do not inc. at sides or dec. in centre, thus making knitting straight instead of vandyke. When work measures 8 ins. dec. both ends of next and every 6th row until work is 12 ins. deep. Cast off.

Make second piece in same way for back, but about 2 ins. from top divide the sts. in halves and work up each half separately, thus leaving a small opening down centre. For strip round waist work a length of ribbing with red wool, thus: Cast on 9 sts. and rib 6 rows.

Now rib on 4 sts. only for an inch, then on the other 5 sts. only for an inch, then rib across the 9 sts. again.

Continue until band is about 2 ins. short of length required to fit comfortably round waist, then make a slot in same way as at beginning, rib 6 rows and cast off.

TO MAKE UP

Press all parts except straps on wrong side under a damp cloth. Sew up sides of suit, sew brassiere in position and if necessary take tiny dart on outer edge each side. Sew side straps over side seams, fitting point in where brassiere meets top of V at back.

Overlap the points at lower edge of suit and sew firmly. With white double crochet tightly along V at back, and make crochet chain and sew upright at centre of V to make a slot through which to pass ends of shoulder straps. Sew up side seams of skirt and sew on band.

Sprains Sports Injuries RUB OUT PAIN with IODEX

In every field of Sport throughout the world, Iodex is used as First-Aid treatment because of its great pain reducing and healing properties. Iodex does not stain or blister the skin. Below are extracts from two interesting letters on our files:—



Strained Muscles. "I had an accident to my leg, playing tennis—strained tendon and sinew. Iodex was used, and in less than a fortnight I played again, keeping the affected part bandaged. I heard of Iodex from another lady player who uses it under doctor's directions for similar injuries."



Painful joints. "Iodex gives great relief from pain. My husband had 'Woodbatter's Knee', and it was very swollen and painful. Our Chemist advised him to use Iodex, which not only relieved, but cured it."

FREE! Write for valuable Iodex First Aid Book. Every home should have one. The Iodex Co., Box 34, P.O., North Sydney.

IODEX
NO-STAIN IODINE
Price 2/- from all Chemists

THE TRUTH ABOUT CONSTIPATION AND HARSH LAXATIVES!



The reason so many people find common constipation hard to get rid of, even though they take the strongest laxatives, is that they are too often unaware of what is making them constipated!

Common constipation is the result of living on foods which are deficient in "bulk." Most of our modern staples—meat, fish, eggs, white bread, potatoes, milk—lack "bulk." These get so completely absorbed by

the system that the residue they form is not enough to make the bowels move. You must get enough "bulk" into your diet to make your bowel muscles act of their own accord. You can easily do this by eating Kellogg's All-Bran. Kellogg's All-Bran forms a soft, bulky mass that the bowel muscles find easy to "take hold of." Kellogg's All-Bran absorbs water and softens like a sponge. This water-softened mass gently but effectively aids elimination.

Start eating All-Bran and soon you'll forget what it is to be constipated. You won't need harsh laxatives. So get a packet of Kellogg's All-Bran to-day.



How much are they worth? In money, nothing. But they both possess a great treasure for which many a potentate would exchange his fortune. They have healthy, abundant, attractive hair.

There is no greater fortune in the world than youth and no better attribute of youth than the hair.

And, how much did it cost him or her to preserve that gift? Only a few pence, the price of a bottle of Barry's Tri-coph-erous and the few minutes required daily for its pleasant application.

Are you among the prodigal sons of nature who are squandering this inheritance? That is, are you allowing neglect and dandruff to weaken and ruin your hair to the point where you are threatened with baldness?

If so, it is deplorable, but not irreparable.

Barry's Tri-coph-erous will save your hair as it has in millions of other cases during five generations.

A daily application of this unequalled tonic and massage of the scalp is all you need. Start at once. In a short time the improved condition of your hair will show you in a practical way why Barry's Tri-coph-erous is called everywhere Life, Health and Beauty of the hair.

**BARRY'S
Tri-coph-erous**
For Luxuriant Hair Growth
Sold by all Chemists and Stores 3/- per bottle

PRUNELLA STACK

starts you on the

'DAILY DOZEN'

THIS article continues a series by Prunella Stack (Lady Douglas Hamilton), head of the world-wide Women's League of Health and Beauty.

EXERCISES FOR WARMING-UP.

START your daily ten minutes for some of the exercises illustrated here for improving circulation.

Practise in front of an open window, wearing as few clothes as possible.

If you can do the exercises to radio or gramophone music, Irish-jig time, so much the better.

1. Feet together, clap quickly down in front of the body, bending forward and up to chest, standing up. Twice. Repeat, clapping down sides. Twice.

2. Spring alternate knees up to chest as high as possible. Eight times. Spring alternate feet back, hitting back. Eight times.

3. Clasp right knee, hop eight times on left leg. Repeat, changing legs. Repeat, turning twice to the right for eight, then twice to the left for eight.

4. Spring with feet together, remembering "central control," eight times. Then add arms, swinging forward and back, four times.

5. Still springing with feet, clap hands overhead, then behind the back, backs of hands meeting. This ensures flat shoulders. Eight times.

6. Repeat knees up in front eight times, knees back, eight times, then knees up 16 times, getting higher and higher.

Finish sitting cross-legged on the floor.



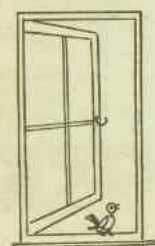
Exercise 1.



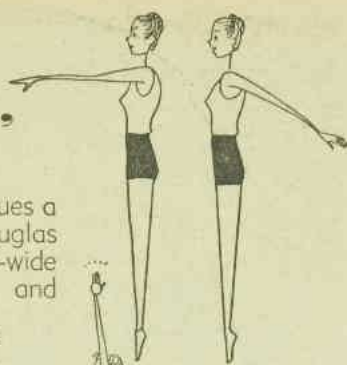
Exercise 2.



Exercise 3.



Exercise 3.



Exercise 4.



Exercise 5.



Exercise 6.

Little Miss Precious Minutes

She helps with your daily round



TRY rolling your pastry with a round glass bottle filled with very cold or iced water and see what a good effect it has on your pastry.

To prevent wire clothes lines from becoming rusty and marking your clothes, give them a coat of white enamel. Allow to dry thoroughly, of course, before hanging our any clothes.

NEXT time you are threading net or lace curtains onto a rod after washing, place a thimble or glove finger over the end. The rod will slide through easily and the material will not tear.

WHEN a knife blade becomes loose here's the remedy: Detach the blade entirely from the handle and thoroughly clean the stem. Then melt some powdered resin (you can get some from your hardware store) in a tin or an old saucepan over a gas-jet, at the same time heating the stem of the blade.

Don't make it too hot, though, otherwise it might burn the handle, which is usually made of inflammable material. When the resin has melted sufficiently pour it over the stem and quickly insert it back into the handle of the knife. Don't use the knife for a couple of hours after this, as the resin must set firmly.

A.B.C. of cookery

Spaghetti: Italian paste smaller than macaroni, but larger than vermicelli. Used in savory dishes.

Spatula: Broad blade used for mixing.

Splitts: Small Cornish buns made with yeast and milk. Not very sweet. Served split open with cream and jam inserted in the centre. Also made in Devonshire.

Starch: Substance forming the main food element in bread and potatoes, etc.

Sterilise: To render free from germs.



Poor Nan — always out of luck . . .

At the Tennis Match

What a moment to get a stocking ladder — with Jack right beside me. Goodness knows I get enough of them without one spoiling that day!

THEN...

a Month later

Hurry! Not a single embarrassing ladder since Bath gave me that rip about Lux! And what a saving!

MOST ladders are unnecessary! They're caused by perspiration acids left in stockings and harsh cake soap rubbing that rots the threads. So LUX your stockings after every wearing!

LUX Preserves Stocking E-L-A-S-T-I-C-I-T-Y

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PRIZEWINNING RECIPES

. . . all worth trying

THESE recipes sent in by readers have been selected by our cookery expert as this week's prizewinners in our weekly Best Recipe Competition.

YOU too can enter this interesting competition. All you have to do is write out your favorite recipe, attach name and address, and send in to this office.

First prize of £1 is awarded every week for the best recipe received and 2/6 consolation prize is awarded for every other recipe published.

First prize this week is awarded to a reader for her recipe for Chocolate Fruit Royal—a really delicious sweet.

CHOCOLATE FRUIT ROYAL

Four bananas, 1lb. apples, 1 pint milk, 4oz. breadcrumbs, 1oz. cocoa, 5oz. butter, 6oz. brown sugar, 1 egg, 1 lemon.

Peel and grate apples, mash bananas and mix both with grated rind and juice of a lemon. Heat butter and sugar together until a rich caramel forms, then stir in fruit mixture, and continue stirring over a low heat until smooth. Add cocoa to crumbs, and moisten with beaten egg and milk.

Place layers of this mixture in a pudding dish alternately with caramel mixture, put a layer of moistened crumbs on top, and steam for 1½ hours. Serve with chocolate sauce flavored with ginger.

Chocolate Sauce: Mix a piled teaspoon of cornflour and a dessert-spoon of cocoa quite smooth with a little milk or water. Bring the rest of ½ pint of milk or water to boil, and pour over cornflour and cocoa. Simmer for a few minutes. Add sugar and ginger to taste.

First Prize of £1 to W. Millington, Sackville St., Hawthorne NE1, Brisbane.

ASPARAGUS SHAPE

One small tin asparagus, 1 teaspoon mustard, ½ teaspoon white pepper, 1 tablespoon sugar, a good teaspoon salt, 2 eggs, 1 teacup good vinegar, 1 heaped tablespoon butter, 1 good ½oz. gelatine, 1 level tablespoon flour, and sufficient milk when added to the asparagus liquid from the tin of tips to make a breakfast cup.

Empty tin and drain liquid into a cup. Cut off green heads and keep them separate. Cut up stems finely and crush to a pulp. Mix mustard, sugar, pepper and salt with

yolks of 2 eggs in a basin and then stir in the vinegar. Stir well.

Put butter in a small pan, and when dissolved blend in the flour. Add the asparagus liquid and stir well. When this mixture is smooth, add the amount of milk that was required to make up breakfast cupful when added to the quantity of asparagus liquid, and bring to boil.

Add crushed stems and beat them through sauce. Add vinegar and egg mixture, a very little at a time, stirring all the time, and cook sufficiently to just let it become thick and creamy. Be careful it does not boil again. Let this stand where it will keep warm till gelatine is ready.

Dissolve gelatine in ½ cup of hot water and strain into hot mayonnaise sauce. Blend well and put aside to cool but not set. When cold, fold in stiffly-beaten whites of two eggs and beat till mixture becomes spongy like cream, and looks like setting. Turn into a wet mould in a cool place, or set on ice. When required, turn out on a dish and, if possible, decorate with tips from a second tin of asparagus by arranging them around the base.

Consolation Prize of 2/6 to Miss Kayne Henry, 8 Ruabon Rd., Toorak, Vic.

APRICOT AND PINEAPPLE JAM

One pineapple, 1lb. dried apricots, 3lb. sugar, 3 pints water.

Soak apricots in three pints water for 24 hours (after washing them), add grated pineapple and cook for ½ hour, then add 3lb. sugar and boil another 20 minutes. Bottle while warm.

Consolation Prize of 2/6 to Mrs. J. Clark, Idealia, McKillop St., Belgian Gardens, Townsville, Qld.

LOBSTER SURPRISE

Allow 1 large firm tomato to each person, and, after cutting top off, scoop pulp out.

Now take half a medium-sized lobster and shred all the flesh from shell. Melt 1 heaped tablespoon butter in saucepan. Grate in 2oz. cheese, sift in 2 heaped tablespoons plain flour, and add 1 cup milk slowly and stir till thick. Now add 1 gill cream, a pinch cayenne pepper and salt to taste and then pulp



APPETISING BRAN MUFFINS are favorites in Dorothy Moore's household. The RKO player is seen here with a panful she has just taken from the oven. Perhaps you love to cook, too, and have some favorite recipes. If so, send them in to us, and you may win a cash prize.

of tomatoes. Add shredded lobster and stir well. Fill each tomato shell and sprinkle top with breadcrumbs. Place in a baking dish with 1 tablespoon melted butter and 1 cup hot water. Cook in moderate oven 20 minutes. Serve on a bed of creamed potato, garnish with a little parsley and slices of lemon.

Consolation Prize of 2/6 to Mrs. L. McMillan, 154 Beach St., Coogee, N.S.W.

CALCUTTA RICE

One pint milk, 1½oz. rice, 4oz. grated cheese, 1 onion, 3 tomatoes, salt, pepper, sprig of parsley.

Boil rice and slice onion in milk. Simmer gently three-quarters of an hour, until tender, stir occasionally. Add grated cheese, sliced tomatoes, salt, pepper. Bake in moderate oven

for quarter-hour. Garnish with parsley. Serve hot.

Consolation Prize of 2/6 to Kate Kennedy, Deewhy Rd., North Curl Curl, N.S.W.

CREME-DE-MENTHE JELLIES

Four level tablespoons powdered gelatine, 1 pint boiling water, 2lb. sugar, a pinch citric acid, powdered (as much as will go on a sixpenny piece), 1 teaspoon oil of peppermint, 1 teaspoon green coloring.

Time of boiling, 20 minutes. Put gelatine in a large enamel saucepan, pour boiling water on, and stir thoroughly till both come to boil, then add sugar gradually so that it does not grain on sides of saucepan and keep stirring till it boils.

Take your time from this moment. Now add powdered acid and keep at boiling point for 20 minutes. It is advisable to use an asbestos mat to prevent burning and boiling over. Keep skimmed. Just as 20 minutes are completed, add coloring and flavoring, and then pour into an aluminium pan that has been damped and shaken dry. A pan 10 inches by 7 inches will ensure jellies being of 1 inch thickness. When set, cut into strips, roll in sifted icing sugar, cut strips into inch squares, and finish rolling.

Consolation Prize of 2/6 to Mrs. H. J. Braund, Box 482, Aurum Hill, Griffith, N.S.W.

GORGEOUS LEMON CREAM PIE

One and one-third cups sweetened condensed milk, 1 cup lemon juice, grated rind of lemon or 1 teaspoon of lemon extract, ½ cup whipped cream, 2 tablespoons finely-powdered sugar, unbaked crumb-crust.

Blend together sweetened condensed milk, lemon juice, and grated lemon rind. It thickens just as though you were cooking it to a glorious creamy smoothness. Pour into an 8-inch pie plate, lined with unbaked crumb-crust. Cover with whipped cream, sweetened with powdered sugar. Chill before serving.

Unbaked Crumb - Crust: Roll enough vanilla wafers to make ½ cup crumbs. Cut enough vanilla wafers in halves to stand around edge of pie plate. Cover bottom of pie plate with crumbs, and fill in spaces between wafers. Pour in filling as usual.

Consolation Prize of 2/6 to Mrs. F. Hooten, 25 Baden-Powell St., Rockhampton, Qld.

LIVER SAUSAGES

One small lamb's fry, 6 tablespoons breadcrumbs, 2 tablespoons chopped bacon, salt and pepper, 1 egg, nutmeg to flavor, 1 teaspoon chopped parsley, 1 tablespoon stock. Mince or chop fry, mix with other

ingredients, and roll into sausages. Coat with flour, and fry gently for ten to fifteen minutes. Serve hot with mashed potato.

Consolation Prize of 2/6 to Miss Mary Wilson, 183 Napier Tce., Westbourne Park, S.A.

BEETROOT JAM

Peel 6 large beets and simmer for ½ hour with 1½ pints water. Skim well. Add 4lb. loaf sugar, strained juice of 6 lemons, and grated rind of three. Add small stick cinnamon, little vanilla flavoring, 2 or 3 cloves. Boil all well till syrup thickens. Put in jars. Must be quite cold before tying down.

Consolation Prize of 2/6 to M. Clarke, 56 Oakover St., East Fremantle, W.A.



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IT'S SO EASY WITH ROBIN STARCH

SUMMER TIME DESSERTS . . .

are so attractive and appetising

● It's an easy matter to introduce plenty of color into your cold desserts for summer. By this means, too, you serve a double purpose, because attractive-looking food tempts jaded appetites.

RESOLVE to make full use of your ice-chest or refrigerator this summer. Even before the weather is really hot cold desserts have their place.

Some people like them at all times, and if your first course has been a heavy one you simply must have a light sweet to follow.

COFFEE CREAM WITH ORANGE SAUCE

One pint milk, 1 small tablespoon gelatine, 1 dessertspoon sugar, 3 tablespoons water, 2 tablespoons coffee essence.

Measure sugar and milk into an enamelled saucepan. Stir over heat until sugar has dissolved, but do not allow to boil. Dissolve gelatine in water and add. Flavor to taste with coffee essence (about 2 tablespoons). Pour into a wet fancy mould. When



set turn out into a shallow glass dish and pour the orange sauce around it.

Orange Sauce: Juice 2 large oranges, rind 1 lemon and 1 orange, 2 level tablespoons sugar, 1 level tablespoon cornflour.

Grate orange and lemon rind very

By MARY FORBES

Cookery Expert to The Australian Women's Weekly

HONEYCOMB MOULDS are a novelty in sweets, and the answer to your problem if you're looking for "something for a change."

thinly. Add strained orange juice and sugar. Blend cornflour with water. Bring all slowly to the boil and simmer gently 5 minutes.

CARAMEL TOFFEE CUSTARD

Custard: One pint milk, 2 eggs, 1 tablespoon sugar, vanilla to taste, grated nutmeg.

Heat milk in a double saucepan or jug standing in hot water. Beat eggs and sugar together. Pour hot milk on to them, and beat well together. Return to saucepan and cook slowly until custard coats the spoon. If overcooked the custard curdles. Allow to cool. Add vanilla. Pour into glass dish. Grate nutmeg over the top and chill.

Caramel Toffee: One small cup crystal sugar, pinch cream of tartar, 2 tablespoons warm water.

Place sugar, water and cream of tartar in a small saucepan. Stir over low heat until sugar has dissolved. Place lid on saucepan and boil quickly 1 minute. Remove lid and continue to boil steadily until syrup changes to a light honey color. Remove from fire at once. Allow to cool a little, then pour in a thin stream into the custard, backwards and forwards, making it into a kind of nest. Serve at once, as caramel toffee soon melts and settles as a syrup in the bottom of the custard.

ORANGE SOUFFLE

One packet orange jelly crystals, 1 pint boiling water, juice 1 large orange, 2 oranges divided into sections, angelica cut into diamonds

Dissolve jelly crystals in the boiling water. Add orange juice and sugar. Allow to cool. Then set a layer of jelly in the mould. Decorate with sections of orange and diamonds of angelica. Cover this with more liquid jelly and allow to become quite firm. Whip the remaining jelly until frothy and thick. Pour into the mould and chill. Turn out onto serving dish and decorate round the base with the remaining sections of orange.

FRUIT JELLY TRIFLE

One packet raspberry jelly crystals, 1 small tin sliced pineapple or stewed pineapple, 3 passionfruit, 1 orange, 1 gill whipped cream, 14 ratafia biscuits, 4 walnuts, 1 cherry.

Make raspberry jelly in usual way, using a little less water. Prepare fruits by cutting into small dice. When jelly is beginning to thicken add prepared fruits and stir over ice until beginning to set. Pour into a wet fancy mould and chill thoroughly. Turn out onto serving dish. Pour whipped cream, which has been sweetened and flavored, over top. Place ratafia round edge and decorate top with walnuts and the whole cherry. Chop remaining jelly on wet paper and put round the edge. Serve very cold.

Blancmange may be used instead of the raspberry jelly if desired.

On no account use fresh pineapple, it will prevent the jelly from setting.



DOESN'T THIS fruit jelly trifle look good? It tastes even better. See recipe given on this page.

GOOSEBERRY TAPIOCA

One cup tapioca, 1 lb. gooseberries, 1 pint boiling water, 1 dessertspoon lemon juice, 1 cup sugar, 1 gill whipped cream, 1 tablespoon chopped walnuts, 2 tablespoons sugar.

Wash tapioca. Drain well and place in a basin. Cover with cold water. Soak overnight. Next morning place in saucepan with lemon juice and 2 tablespoons sugar. Cover and simmer gently until tapioca is quite clear.

Top and tail gooseberries. Stew carefully in a thick syrup made with 1 cup sugar and 1 cup water until gooseberries are soft but unbroken. Allow to cool and place in a glass dish. Cover with tapioca and when well chilled pour over a thin layer of whipped cream. Sprinkle with chopped walnuts.

HONEYCOMB MOULDS

One pint milk, 2 eggs, 1 tablespoon sugar, 3 tablespoons water, 1 teaspoon vanilla, 1 dessertspoon melted chocolate, 1 dessertspoon gelatine, desiccated coconut and angelica.

Separate yolks from whites of eggs. Heat milk and sugar together. When almost at boiling point stir in egg-yolks and continue to stir until custard thickens. Do not boil. Dissolve gelatine in the water and add to custard. Add vanilla to half the custard and chocolate to other half. Whip up egg-whites stiffly. Fold into mixtures. Pour each custard into wet individual moulds. Turn out when cold, and set. Serve decorated with coconut and angelica.

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MENACE!



SUPPLEMENT — MUST NOT
BE SOLD SEPARATELY.

Australian Women's Weekly
NOVEL, September 23, 1939

BY JOHN CREASEY

MENACE!

By JOHN CREASEY



BOB KERR had every reason in the world not to want a visitor that afternoon. The sun contrived to reach even Brock Street, and was shining with unusual brilliance on the windows of the houses on the other side of the road. With a less urgent matter on his mind, he might have contemplated the smears on those windows and considered the iniquity—or difficulties—of window-cleaners, but he was wholly wrapped up in the prospect of an afternoon drive as far as Dorking, and then a little off the beaten track to a certain Rose Cottage.

A corner of Surrey where the warm August rains had prepared a splendid September, where fields of corn as yet un-gathered would remind Kerr—who at the time was listed as Number Two on the records of a peculiar Department at Whitehall called Z—that there could be peace and serenity and freedom from the continual fear that one day a fleet of hostile aircraft would speckle the clear blue sky and blast the quiet of the countryside into chaos.

Robert McMillan Kerr, to give him his full name, was by no means a pessimist. On the contrary, he frequently proved that he was a super-optimist by attempting the impossible, and if his record was not one of hundred per cent. success, it at least did him credit.

But there were wars and rumors of wars, there were divers disfigured elder statesmen putting a foot in it, elegant junior statesmen jumping in with both feet, gentlemen of dictatorial habits as far apart as the Far East and Northern Europe going on their own sweet way and putting hands, feet, torso and even head and shoulders into the unholy tangle of human hopes, ambitions, ideals, greed and vice called the world.

Kerr had no great opinion of it, but on a fair afternoon with so desirable a jaunt in prospect, the world was bright enough. Lightened, of course, by the fact that in five minutes Lois Dacre—Number Eleven in that same Department, and also off duty—was due to call at 77g Brook Street. They were going to make an oft-promised and much-delayed call on a big man named Burke and a lovely lady named Patricia, his wife.

Kerr, looking out of the window towards the Piccadilly end from which Lois would come, cocked his head a little on one side.

On the opposite side of the road a man was walking. That in itself was hardly novel. But the manner of the walk—slow, measured as though the walker was anxious not to appear ungaily—was novel in the extreme. Moreover the walker affected a large brown fur coat, a woman's rather than a man's. It was more than a trifle

on the short side, ending a little below the knees so that the legs, clad with tight-fitting trousers, poked downwards like spindles. Even from the second floor of 77g Brook Street the yellow suede shoes were vivid, as was the bald patch on the top of the man's head.

He was perspiring, and mopping at his brow with a brightly colored handkerchief; as far as Kerr could see his pale face held an expression of surprise, as though he had hardly expected to be hot in that dress during a warm September afternoon.

Was he a foreigner or a freak? wondered Kerr.

One or the other, it mattered little. Kerr let himself glance towards the Piccadilly end again, wishing he had called for Lois Dacre, instead of allowing her to wait on him. She was the most considerate of women, and she had not been sure what time she would be free.

When Kerr looked back at the man in the fur coat he saw that the fellow was observing the numbers of the houses. He turned suddenly, opposite 77g, and made his way to Kerr's side of the road. Half-way across he disappeared from Bob Kerr's sight, if not from his memory.

"Odd cuss," said Kerr to no one in particular. "I—Confound the thing!"

It was the telephone, as strident as usual, from a corner of the room. The room was one of three that comprised the flat, and the telephone was only answered by Mold—Kerr's man—when Kerr was absent.

The flat and Mold were recent acquisitions. Mold had come from a domestic servants' agency with excellent references, and Department Z had looked him over—past and present—with satisfactory results. He was neither a perfect automaton nor a plying fool, and Kerr was getting used to him.

Kerr had, however, been allowed to select the flat without the approval of Department Z.

"About as far as I could go," he grumbled as he picked up the receiver. There was one thing he could never entirely approve in working for Z: the necessary supervision of details. You had to be on the qui vive all the time, and your servants had to submit to stringent inquiries—a rule of the Department after one of its agents had been found to have been employing a German Secret Service man as a valet for eighteen months! But Kerr acknowledged that he could hardly expect to work for the most exclusive branch of British Intelligence, and live a free social life.

But if this call was from Craigie—

Craigie, of course, was Department Z. He called himself its Number One agent, although he directed more often than he worked, and he had a becoming habit of making his men like their job, no matter

when it interrupted normal routine. This time, however, Kerr was prepared to rebel.

Craigie's quiet and well-modulated voice came all too familiarly to Kerr's ears.

"No," said Kerr, "it's too bad. I'm positively full up for the afternoon and evening, old man; find one of the other men to take this job."

Craigie—Gordon Craigie, who had lived and worked so long in and for England that only the faintest trace of Scottish accent remained—spoke reassuringly.

"All right, Bob, it's not urgent. But slip over and see me some time before midnight, will you?"

Kerr felt and looked mollified.

"Right. Anything big?"

"I don't know. I've had several reports in from AKA, and I've a feeling you'll have to go over there for a bit. But it might be a white elephant, and I'm waiting for confirmation, anyhow. Seen Lois lately?"

"I hope to, in about thirty seconds," said Bob Kerr with a smile. "But if you tell me that she's a nice girl again, I'll resign. And—but here she is. Bye"

He gave Gordon Craigie no opportunity for prolonging the conversation, thought fleetingly of AKA—the Department code-word for that nest of trouble in mid-Europe, the principality of Vallena—and stepped towards the door. Someone had tapped, that someone could only be Mold, to announce Lois, and—

Mold, a nondescript-looking man, was holding a visiting-card between unusually long fingers.

"This gentleman, sir, says that he would like to see you urgently. He seems very worried, sir." Mold appeared to be holding a brief for the unwanted visitor, perhaps because he knew Kerr would be inclined to refuse to see all and sundry, save Lois Dacre. Kerr frowned and took the card.

He kept frowning, with one brow a little lower than the other.

"H'mm. Show him in, Mold, and ask Miss Dacre to wait for a few minutes if she arrives before I'm through."

"Very good, sir." Mold closed the door, and Kerr walked back to the window, still holding the card. He had managed to push all thought of Lois Dacre to the back of his mind, for this was a queer business coincidence? Well, it might be, but Kerr was inclined to look for the obvious in all things, and he wondered where he would find it here.

For the card read:

M. Jules Doriennet,
Importer—Exporter,
15, Maistrasse, Baj—Vallena.

In short, Craigie had just said that Kerr might be wanted to make a trip to Vallena, and here was a native—presumed—of the country, and certainly a resident of Baj, the capital, about to enter the room.

Kerr was thumbing his jaw in a gesture that some folk mistook for a nervous one when Mold opened the door and announced Mr. Doriennet. Kerr took a short step forward, and then paused imperceptibly. For there was the fur-coated, narrow-trousered and generally comical pedestrian, looking much hotter at close quarters, and regarding Kerr with a pair of piercingly blue yet startled eyes, as though he expected Kerr to bite him.

Kerr covered his pause quickly. "Ah—Mr. Doriennet." He deliberately said "Mr.," smiled and extended his hand. Doriennet's clasp was firm although, as was to be expected, it was warm.

"Mistah—Kerr?"

Kerr wondered why Mold had not relieved the visitor of the monstrous coat. It looked like fox fur, making Doriennet resemble an Aquilino in equatorial regions.

"That's right. Can I take your coat?"

"Thank you—no." Mold's lapse was explained, for Doriennet hugged his furs closer to him. "It is ver' varm, yea. No?" The expression of perpetual inquiry was surely as good to be false, and at close quarters the strange visitor proved to have yellowish skin, somewhat full cheeks, with his whole face creating a peculiar impression of having been inflated with a cycle pump. His hair was black and wavy, and the bald patch on top had not been Kerr's imagination. The eyebrows slanted a little from the furrow between the brows, towards the temples. He was altogether a rare specimen, and he came from Baj, Vallena—known to some as AKA.

Kerr was a postmaster at a waiting game. "A drink, Mr. Doriennet? Whisky—beer—iced lager?"

"Iced—lager!" Away went the expression of inquiry, to be replaced by one almost of imitation. Doriennet obviously took to Robert McMillan Kerr as a man after his own heart. "Most excellent, Mistah—Kerr. I thank."

Kerr pressed the bell, and Doriennet sat in silence, sometimes eyeing Kerr and sometimes looking out of the window, until the drinks were in. Iced lager on a hot day was Kerr's idea of a perfect drink, and he argued for constant supplies, although he was rarely intemperate.

"Ah—ah." Down went the glass, making a wet circle on a particularly prized and polished table. "So that is possible—even in England. They told me it was always so cold, Mistah—Kerr."

Kerr noticed two things. That his visitor always paused before uttering his name, as though he was still uncertain whether he was in the right flat. Also, that Doriennet was suggesting this was his first visit to England, although he spoke English remarkably well and with an accent of the kind that could easily be assumed. Kerr was already asking himself questions about Mr. Jules Doriennet.

"We all make mistakes," Kerr smiled, and offered cigarettes. Doriennet, however, preferred his own brand—the long Russian cigarettes—and settled down as though prepared to sit all the afternoon. Kerr waited, showing no signs of impatience. Here was a man out of the ordinary, and his call might have a rare importance.

"Yes—yes." Doriennet spoke as though with a sigh. "Mistakes, yes, we all make them. I make them, you make them, but I hope not much, Mistah—Kerr—I make no mistake in coming to see you."

"So do I," murmured Kerr.

Doriennet looked as though he wanted Kerr to ask questions. He paused, tapped

his ash, shrugged his shoulders and went on slowly:

"You are surprised at my coming, yes?"

"I try never to be surprised," said Kerr with his widest smile. "I've no doubt you wanted to see me."

Doriennet examined this conjecture carefully, and presently agreed.

"That is so. On most important business, Mistah Kerr. My coat—you see heem?"

"I've been admiring it," lied Kerr cheerfully.

"So. An' you think I beeg fool, yes, for leaving heem on. Don't tell me! Veil, that is perhaps. In heem, Mistah Kerr, is all I have. My buzz-ness—it is broke. Finished!" Doriennet waved his hands like a man who was talking excitedly, yet he spoke with the utmost gloom and seriousness. "It is ended, I tell you. I, Jules Doriennet, have only enough to live, jus' to live. An' I carry it with me, Mistah Kerr—otherwise they would rob me also of that. Oh, oh, I know them and their ways. I know them—and you, you will fight them!"

Kerr was beginning to get really interested.

Gone was all thought of Rose Cottage, the Burkes, Lois Dacre and an afternoon of lazy enjoyment. In its place was a quick reasoning; that Doriennet looked and talked like a madman. Yet why should a madman pick on Number Two of the British Intelligence Service to find a sympathetic ear for his ramblings? Things like that didn't happen without a good reason.

"I see," he said gravely and obscurely.

"Good! I expect that, from what I have heard of you. He is the man, they say, who will act. He tastes no words. I have heard that with my own eyes. You are the man I want, Mistah Kerr. I tell you I am broke—finished—done down. I, who was the biggest, the best, the most famous trader in Baj. It was a crime, but it cannot now be prevented. It has happened, and why? Because I, Mistah Kerr, would not join them. Because I have always enjoy working and trading with the English. They are fair, yes. They are perhaps at times the fool, but who can not? And here am I, Mistah Kerr, a poor man with only the mon-ee I stand in, telling you this. I am ended because I am a friend of the English, and I will do no things they would have me do."

"Who are 'they'?" asked Kerr mildly.

"They are the fools!" exclaimed Doriennet with sudden wild abandon. "They are the villains, the rogues, the devils; they would— But I am past myself! Mistah Kerr, I tell you this. I come to you because they say: 'Kerr, he was the biggest, the best man in England for the espionage. He is a cleaire, he sticks on, he is much prized by Gord-on Craigie.' This I hear them say ven I am in a room next door. They do not think I hear, oh no. And then I hear also, they will kill me. I, Jules Doriennet, do not wish yet to die. I am young, I wish to live. And they say also this: 'If we kill Kerr, then the trouble is not great.' And I think, if they would kill Kerr and me, then if Kerr is told, he will work to save himself. An' then he will also help me, not to save me, for I am saving myself. Mistah Kerr, but to defeat them. Yes, to defeat them! Yes?"

His sharp look of eager inquiry almost convinced Kerr that it was a fraud or a trick. It gave him the impression that Doriennet was talking deliberately like a crazy fool to hoodwink him, and was extremely anxious to succeed. But Kerr, taking another cigarette slowly from his case, nodded slowly.

"Certainly I shall try, Mr. Doriennet." He pressed the bell, Doriennet leaned back and waited, frowning, and Kerr was actually watching his eyes when Mold answered the summons. "When Miss Dacre arrives, Mold, let me know."

"She is here, sir."

"Oh—" Kerr looked ruefully towards Doriennet. He had seen not the slightest change in the other's expression, and he was reasonably sure that the name Dacre meant nothing to the man from Vallena. "Mr. Doriennet, what you tell me makes me put off an important appointment. If you will excuse me a moment—"

Doriennet's smile grew extra wide, giving his cheeks a comically elastic appearance.

"For the lady. It was a pleasure, Mistah Kerr!"

"Thank you." Kerr slipped out of the room, and Mold closed the door. Mold, moreover, contrived not to look, while Kerr greeted Lois as an engaged man should, seeing also that she realised from his expression that there was cake for tea. Iced cake, in the patter of certain amateur comedians who were also members of the Department called Z.

"Sorry, Lois—but speak to Craigie from the nearest call-box, and tell him to have a man round here in ten minutes. He's to follow the creation who comes out wearing a fur coat, and it mustn't be you, because it looks as though you and I might have other work on foot. Tell Craigie the fellow comes from AKA."

Lois Dacre nodded, smiled and turned towards the door. She was the coolest and most capable woman Kerr knew, and if she was not beautiful she was easy to look at. Her features had a tranquillity that affected Kerr, although sheer beauty left him cold. He flashed a smile as she reached the door a foot in front of Mold and glanced round at him; and then he returned to M. Jules Doriennet.

"It was done, yes? She is understanding, that one?"

"Most," smiled Kerr; and then Doriennet saw an entirely different man. Instead of listening Kerr talked, and most of his words took the form of questions. He hurried them at Doriennet so fast that the Vallonian began to get hot as he answered. But he did answer, and at the end of ten minutes Kerr knew most of what there was to know about the man, assuming he had been answered truthfully.

Towards the end of the interrogation, which had taken the Vallonian completely by surprise, he had been assured that "they" had made certain demands from Doriennet a year before, and that the demands had been uniform with those on other firms.

He had had orders to send poor-quality goods to England, or to ship wrong consignments: be it butter for margarine, or oak for deal, or culture pearls for cheap watches.

That information seemed to be in keeping with the absurdity of the caller, and Kerr was convinced of its truth. No man would imagine stuff like that.

"I see. Well, Mr. Doriennet, we've kept the most important to last. Who are 'they'?"

Doriennet, perspiring freely, eyeing the larger pathetically, and looking a shade more yellow than when he had entered, shrugged his shoulders beneath the great bear of a coat.

"So. Mr. Kerr—it was a normal 'Mr.' this time, Kerr noticed—"you will laugh,

MENACE!

SUPPLEMENT TO
THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEK

you will anger, you will say I lie—but I do not know. These orders I have had, come always by letter. And as I say so, so I lose things. I am robbed. I have the bad luck, a ship goes sunk; an insurance company will not pay me. One—two—three—a hundred! And two days ago I say: I will find them. I have a letter, it was delivered by hand. I follow the man. I find the office he visits. I hear him say he will be there again next day. I go again, taking this time the office next door; it was empty. I hear the talk of killing me, and killing you, an' this man Craigie who they also fear, and I come. I fly, by the air. I know they have finish me. My money is gone. My life, I still have it. I am afraid, perhaps, but I wish to stay alive. I come here, because they say your address. Craigie's—they say not his. But of those men I recognise none. I say only this—one, he is so ver' tall, he is taller than me! Six feet one half, I swear! Now—now you understand?"

Kerr thought he did.

Here was a business man who had been sent remarkable orders, had disobeyed them, and had been systematically made to pay for it. Doriennet possessed greater sticking powers than most, but the final talk of killing had been too much for him. It might, of course, be a clever red herring to get Department Z interested, yet the very bizarreness of it made it seem genuine.

After a pause, Kerr answered, "I think so, Mr. Doriennet, I will certainly make inquiries. But how shall I get in touch with you?"

M. Jules Doriennet's face altered surprisingly. From earnestness it developed cunning—the cunning of a man who was not used to subterfuge but was delighting in his cleverness.

"Ah-ha! I tell you no one, Mistah Kerr—not even you. To-night, this afternoon, I leave here. I disappear! How else can I save myself? It is all prepared, my disappearance! And . . ."

Doriennet suddenly pulled a large gold lever watch from his pocket. His cunning expression was lost in one of anxiety. He jumped up, gathered that voluminous fur coat about him, nodded jerkily to Kerr, and hurried for the door.

Kerr did not try to stop him. Lois would have had the message delivered by now, and Craigie had had good time in which to work.

Smiling and frowning at the same time Kerr stepped to the window. He saw Doriennet hurrying like a whirlwind along Brook Street, and a well-dressed man leave the wheel of a large car and follow him. Kerr recognised the motorist as a Department Z agent named Trale. There was another man nearby.

Kerr suddenly moved from the window, went out of the room faster than Doriennet, grabbed a hat in passing, and was soon in Brook Street. Neither of the others was out of sight, nor was the third man who had inspired Kerr to move so fast.

The third man was also following M. Jules Doriennet, and he was far, far taller than the average. At least six feet and a half thought Kerr, and therefore possessing at least one physical feature of the only member of the "they" whom Doriennet had been able to describe.

"Tump-arry-ump, tump-arry-ump, tump-arry-ump!" carolled Mr. Frederick Kingham, knotting a chotely colored tie while holding an unimportant chin well

forward and craning a neck inclined to thinness. "Tump-arry-ump, tump-arry-ump, tump-arry-ump—UMP! That's about it, I fancy. Thank heavens it isn't one of those places where one has to dress. Why do I always like a dinner-jacket when I'm in it and hate it when I'm out of it? Bad upbringing by artistic father, I suppose. Tump-arry-ump, tump—Come in!"

The knocking on the door just succeeded in piercing the din, but Kingham showed no embarrassment at having been overheard in his vociferous as he screwed his head round towards the door.

Some twenty feet across a large and pleasantly furnished bedroom stood a middle-aged man dressed in sombre black, and with face and hands that might have been bleached white. He was bowing a little. Bennet, thought Freddie Kingham, had probably served Royalty or at least a duchy—was that how to put it?—in his time. Bit of a come-down, come to think of it, to wait on a prominent industrialist and that industrialist's various relative-appurtenances, including him, Freddie Kingham, and a painter-father who had rarely succeeded in selling a picture, even for a chocolate-box.

Bennet, though, was a good sort. He could be relied on for a fiver at a pinch. Odd, how all the crowd at Lane House were good sorts or sports. Even Uncle Matt and the pantry-boy. That probably accounted for Freddie's high spirits, for he was heart-free.

"Lo, Bennet. What can I do for you?"

"There is a young lady to see you, sir." "En? Young what? I don't believe it, Bennet; my conscience is quite clear. It must be my brother she's after, and he's probably half-way up the Zambesi River by now."

Bennet was insistent. "She distinctly said, 'Mr. Frederick Kingham,' sir."

Freddie gravitated towards the door as he straightened his coat-collar.

"Odd. I can't think of any girl wanting to see me. You said young. Any other qualifications?"

"A personable young lady, sir."

"En? Person—oh, pretty. H'm. Where is she, Bennet?"

"In the morning-room, sir. Mr. Matthew is in the drawing-room, with the vicar, and I thought . . ."

"Discretion, eh?" Freddie grinned. "Did she say what she wanted? You don't know her, by any chance?"

"She's a stranger to me, sir. She said the business was strictly private."

"Looks worse and worse," beamed Freddie. "Well, I'd better get it over."

Freddie, still smiling and humming under his breath, reached the bottom of a wide flight of stairs and turned left towards the morning-room of Lane House. Lane House was one of those country places which were more than villas, and yet not quite mansions.

At six o'clock that evening—the evening of the day when Bob Kerr had talked with Mr. Doriennet of Vallens—the windows were being used to let the slanting rays of the sun lend everything a rich golden hue, and as Freddie glimpsed the chaste lawns and the riotous flower-beds outside, he told himself again that life was good.

And to think that three years before he had come down from Cambridge to find his father "broke to the wide," and quarrelling with the provoker of the Kingham com-

fort—Uncle Matt—his brother Sam in a kind of disgrace, not to mention a positively empty interior for most of a summer and a winter.

Freddie, who was not equipped for ordinary trials of working life, had found it hard but smiled through it. In the quarrel between his father and Mr. Mathew Horn (his mother's brother) had been patched up, and for nearly two years Freddie had worked five days a week in the offices of Horn, Beddle, Graham & Co., importers and exporters, and on the other two days at Lane House. Today was Saturday.

When he opened the morning-room door—Bennet had to be on hand below-stairs in case there was a call from the morning-room—Freddie had something of a shock.

His caller was distinctly personable, and very pretty. Hardly beautiful perhaps, but she had "something"—the way she smiled at him, for instance, made his heart beat. She stood up quickly from her chair as Freddie hurried forward.

"No, don't get up, I . . ."

"I hope you'll forgive me, Mr. Kingham. He would have forgiven anyone or anything who could smile at him like that. 'I had come unofficially, and could not give a better my card.'"

Despite his request, she was standing up to him. Her perfume, whatever it was, was a subtly Freddie was experienced enough to admire. With the sun shining on her hair like that she— Good heavens!

For Freddie Kingham had glanced at her hair to the card she had given him, and he saw.

Miss L. I. Dale,
Special Branch,
Scotland Yard, S.W.1.

"Scotland Yard!" breathed Freddie Kingham, groping for cigarettes. "I—smoke. No, I've got a match. But what on earth do you want to see me about?"

Miss L. I. Dale, whom Bob Kerr had identified as Lois Dacre, of Crime Department Z, smiled again as she sat opposite the youthful member of the family of Horn, Beddle and Graham, Freddie Kingham, and regarded him tranquilly.

"Well, it's not too easy to explain, Mr. Kingham. I must say at once that I have to rely on your discretion, and not a word of this conversation must be repeated to you promise that?"

Freddie frowned.

"We—ell. It depends what it's about, you know. I can't make loose promises, sir."

Lois Dacre changed her opinion of the man in front of her. Nine out of ten, his age, would have promised to hold his tongue for ever, and afterwards blurted questions out at the first opportunity. This man promised secrecy he would probably maintain it; that was promising.

"I quite understand," she assured him. "But before we talk, I wonder if you'll make sure we can't be overheard?"

Freddie looked startled.

"Good lord, that's all right. Walls are thick as blazes, and the door's curtained. Absolute privacy guaranteed. But look here—"

"It's going to sound absurd, and you wonder why I've talked like I have, but I'm really anxious that your uncle should know nothing of this for a while, Mr. Kingham. No, it's nothing criminal, it's merely something we are investigating for another day and the trails happen to cross."

Freddie licked his lips. Here was a peach of a girl and a spot of police inquiries, both things in which he had always specialised, in a purely detached and independent manner.

"Carry on, please!"
"Thanks. You work at the offices of Horn, Beddie and Graham, don't you?"

"Yes. Have for a couple of years, more or less. I'm a kind of liaison officer or tact merchant between departments and customers."

Lois Daere laughed. Kingham was a refreshing youngster.
"Then you've been overworked lately, haven't you?"

"Overworked?" Freddie wondered if she were pulling his leg. "Well, hardly. Been a few spots of bother one way and the other, but generally I can't say I'm put on. Folks are pretty decent on the whole, you know, and if there's a spot of trouble, a drop of apologising goes a long way." Freddie, in his way, possessed philosophy.

"I was thinking of the consignments of goods you've had recently from the exporters of Baj."

Lois put the question gently, watching for the reaction, and she found what she wanted. Freddie started, and then frowned. She saw that his manner had altered; he looked a stronger character than he had before.

"I see. How on earth you got on to that I don't know, but it's certainly been the bane of my life. Lost us a packet in orders, too. A messy business. Clocks," broke off Freddie with a grimace, "when we ordered tie-presses, and that's a mild one. Soap for margarine once, and—but still, you seem to know all about it."

Lois shook her head.
"I don't, but I've heard a little, and I want to learn more. As a matter of fact there's one thing you can perhaps tell me right away, and another you might be able to get for me. First, how many Vallenian firms have supplied the right things lately?"

Freddie scratched his chin.
"We—all, several of them, more or less accidentally as far as I can see. Only Doriennet's have been on the mark always and we had a cable in to-day saying they're going out of business. Looks as though we'll have to close down with our orders over there, Miss—er—Daere. What's the other thing?"

Lois Daere leaned back a little, her eyes narrowing, and her hair catching the sun again. She hesitated before she said:

"Mr. Kingham, this inquiry is an unusual one, and we are anxious that no principals of the firms concerned should know of it. I'm anxious to get a complete list of the wrongly shipped goods and all the firms concerned. Would that be possible, do you think?"

Freddie looked a little put out.
"Without Uncle Matt knowing, eh? Well, it could be done, but I'm afraid I can't do it. Er—hardly the thing, you know. Uncle Matt's a pretty good sort, and..."

Lois smiled reassuringly.
"It's all right. I hardly expected you to say 'yes,' and later on we shall probably have to get the particulars from other firms as well as yourselves. Don't worry, please. Now one other question, and I needn't worry you again. Have you ever come in contact with a Vallenian—or anyone in the trade, for that matter; if he comes from abroad who is abnormally tall? I can't tell you anything more about him, but that is a guide."

"You mean Kryn," said Freddie with certainty.

"Kryn?"

"K-R-Y-N. He's a kind of floating commission man, if you know what I mean? Doesn't work for any particular firm, but often slides in with a bit of commission. For instance, we might want a dozen gross of clocks, and if we get half a gross extra—at his request—we can buy 'em for a much lower price than he could get a single half-gross lot. Following me?"

"Yes, quite well."

He did not know the jubilation that was filling agent Eleven of Department Z. Lois Daere had hardly expected to get information so promptly about the tall man who had cropped up suddenly, virtually on heels of the remarkable M. Jules Doriennet of Baj. Moreover, she had obtained confirmation in many ways of the Vallenian's story, sufficiently corroborative at least to make it more likely true than false.

Freddie Kingham beamed. He had forgotten that it was half past six, and that at six-forty-five he was due at the house of friends, fifteen miles away, so that he would have to be late.

"Good work, Miss Daere! Not everyone gets into it as quickly as you do—it took me a month," he added with complete and disarming frankness. "But I was never really quick on the up-take. Look here, what put you on to me?"

Lois said that the caretaker of the offices had known Mr. Frederick Kingham worked there, and also lived with his uncle, the firm's only remaining original partner. She failed to say a lot that would have been interesting to Freddie.

In the three and a half hours since Doriennet had left 77c Brook Street, many things had happened with the speed and thoroughness that characterised the agents of Department Z at work.

The agent named Trale had followed Doriennet as far as Heston, where the Vallenian had taken a private plane and started for the Lord knew where. Obviously he had paid for his plane and his pocket was—literally—well-lined, or he proposed to bilk the aeroplane company. Trale neither knew nor cared. He had taken the number, make and description of the plane, discovered the name of the pilot from the offices, learned that Doriennet, who had booked the bus in his right name, was believed to be going to Scotland. Such was Trale's report to Gordon Craigie, who had been in his Whitehall office waiting for the developments to take on some pattern.

Bob Kerr, meanwhile, had passed an interesting hour.

The extremely tall man, whose name it later turned out was Kryn, followed Doriennet as far as the turning towards Heston airport off the Great West Road. Kryn and Doriennet had used taxis; Kerr had commandeered the powerful car that Trale had left behind, and Trale had managed to get a small one—Dodo Trale, one of the oldest agents in the Department's service, had a peculiar habit of finding things to make his life comfortable.

Apparently Kryn had been satisfied that Doriennet needed no further following.

He had taken the same taxi back to Piccadilly, alighted at the Circus, and then walked to the Ritz Hotel. Kerr had taken the car by easy stages to the hotel, waited five minutes and then discovered—because he was known to the commissioner—that the tall man had booked a room in the

name of Jacobs, and that he had never been to the hotel before.

To further reveal the thoroughness of Department Z—and to make busy some of the agents who had worked for years under Gordon Craigie—Kerr had telephoned Craigie from a call-box in the hotel. Three things had happened.

Craigie had detailed two men—a certain long, weary-looking and well-dressed gentleman known as Wallace Davidson, and another man almost as tall, certainly as thin and very fair-haired, named Robert Carruthers—to visit the Ritz Hotel and watch "Jacobs" and his visitors. He had also been in touch with Lois Daere, who had visited Scotland Yard to discover what she could of Doriennet's business associates in England.

Despite the fact that it was Saturday, the Yard had had little trouble in discovering that Messrs. Horn, Beddie and Graham, of Tooley Street, S.E., had for some time been Doriennet's best English customer. Lois had visited the warehouse caretaker, learned of Freddie Kingham's part and, from the caretaker's garrulousness, gathered that Kingham was more likely to talk than anyone else in the firm.

Armed with Kerr's knowledge of the tall man (through Craigie), she had visited Lane House, situated some mile and a half from Camberley High Street, and an hour and a half's run from London.

Lois Daere then knew as much as there was to know of the affair so far and, rejoicing in the discovery of Kryn and what little Kingham knew of him, took her leave. She had hinted at the likelihood of needing his help again, had left her private phone number of her Audley Street address, and suggested that if anyone wondered why she had come, she should be called an old acquaintance of Freddie's.

Freddie watched her driving in a small car down the drive. As the car disappeared he snapped his fingers in high glee, and started to tump-ump boisterously. Half-way up the stairs he ran into Bennet.

Freddie thought more quickly than was his wont, and proved that he had certain attributes of a diplomat.

"I did know her, Bennet—very old friend of my palmer days—quite O.K. if she should call again."

"Very good, sir," said Bennet, and bowed in that manner that always reminded Freddie of Royalty. Freddie went upstairs to his room, loaded himself with cigarettes, telephoned his friends at Farnham that he would be late, and went blithely to the garage.

The grounds of Lane House were delightful. In his more thoughtful moments Freddie Kingham appreciated them. He even did a spot of weeding occasionally, to show Uncle Matt he was not afraid of getting his hands dirty.

For some unknown reason the garage, actually three converted stables, was a hundred yards from the house itself. Freddie was whistling as he reached the doors, unlocking them to see his own car—a gift, of course, from Uncle Matt—spick and span in front of him. He hooked the garage doors back, kicked the front tyres to make sure they were hard enough, and then repeated the test with the back ones. He was about to move to the driving-wheel when he caught sight of the thing.

Freddie stopped, and stood very still. At first glance it was a coat. An unfamiliar coat, of a lightish brown fur, bundled into a corner and difficult to see. But as he stared he saw the feet poking

from one end, and the head from the other—a head that it was difficult to recognise, for the top seemed to have been blown right off.

Freddie Kingham's first reaction was to be sick.

He moved his right hand tremblingly towards his pocket, took out cigarettes, and lit one. The smoke eased his tenseness. Somehow he disliked leaving the thing there, but he had to go. Yet he remembered reading somewhere that you should never leave a body if it were possible to stay near it. Someone might come and mess about with the clues. He gulped, drew harder at the cigarette, and then caught a glimpse of a maid near the kitchen door.

His first call was a croak, and then his voice grew firmer. The maid heard him, and approached.

"Cut in, and tell Bennet to bring Mr. Horn, at once," said Freddie more steadily than he had expected. "Don't lose a second."

The girl was startled into acting promptly. Freddie saw her disappear, pushed his hand through his mouse-colored hair, and lit another cigarette. The first was sodden by his lips, and would not smoke.

Apparently Lucy—the maid—contrived to pass on some idea of Freddie's urgency. Bennet and Matthew Horn approached from the kitchen door, the quickest route from the house. Bennet showed no expression. Matthew Horn looked prepared to be annoyed or angered.

"Well, now, Freddie, what's the trouble?" Kingham lowered his cigarette with a hand that trembled.

"Sorry—Uncle. It's pretty—beastly. In the garage."

"My dear boy . . ."

"A dead man," Kingham said slowly.

Bennet, eyeing him uncertainly at first, let his feelings show for once. His mouth gaped, and he started back as though he was about to be kicked. Horn's only change was a narrowing of his eyes.

"In the corner of the garage," Freddie muttered. "I really can't—can't face it again. Shall I—phone the police?"

"Stay just where you are," said Matthew Horn.

He walked in surprisingly sprightly fashion for a man of his bulk and age. Bennet unhappily lagged behind him. Freddie saw them disappear into the garage, one after the other. They did not disappear for long, and when they came out Bennet's pallor had increased, while Matthew Horn was running his forefinger and thumb up and down his left lapel—his usual sign of nervous tension.

"Very nasty," said Horn slowly. "Will you stay here, Freddie—no need to go nearer the garage—and make sure no one approaches. I'll send for Browning, and then telephone the police. Have you plenty of cigarettes?"

"Yes—thanks."

Freddie managed to think of his uncle's consideration. It jolted him out of a morbid contemplation of that horrible thing in the garage, and he smoked more freely. The others disappeared, and in a couple of minutes a tall, ungainly-looking man dressed in a loose tweed suit considerably the worse for wear arrived at a jog-trot. This was Browning, the Lane House odd-job man.

He touched his hanging forelock.

"Bit o' trouble, sir?"

"Rather nasty," Freddie agreed. "Don't

go in. You haven't seen any strangers about, have you?"

Browning scratched his chin.

"Well, yes an' no, sir. They comes off that footpath by the fence rather a lot, sir—arter the apples. No saying who might have come in or gone out, come to think."

His nerves steadier, Freddie began to think out whys and wherefores. And then suddenly—so suddenly that Browning thought he had had a shock—he remembered the woman from Scotland Yard. She was a complete stranger, and she had been at hand.

No! He was going crackers; a woman of that type would not have done a thing like murder. Anyhow, she was working for the police. By Jove, inquiring about Doriennet, too! This looked hot! When the local police arrived he could—

Freddie suddenly remembered that he had promised not to talk of her visit. He was a man of his word, and he did not persuade himself that it would be justifiable to break it now. Pity she would not be home yet, but he could leave a message—lucky she had given him her private number—and she would ring him back pretty fast. She had been gone half an hour now, and ought to be in London before eight o'clock.

At a quarter to eight Bob Kerr was sitting in a roomy office just off Whitehall.

It was barely furnished, particularly at the far end, where a few filing-cabinets—increasing year by year—a table with several telephones, and a dictaphone, were standing. At the other end, clustered round a low but burning coal fire, were two easy chairs, several hard-back ones, a cupboard—with the door closed but containing a remarkable collection of oddments, from food stuffs to clean collars—and two small tables.

It was the office of Department Z.

Gordon Craigie, sitting back now in the easiest of the easy chairs, spent so much time there that he needed a section to serve as living quarters. Craigie's coffee—he drank it all through the day—was famous, but Craigie himself was known as the Chief of Department Z only to a few.

His eyes, large, grey, capable of varying expressions but often placid, smiled at Kerr, who had just come in.

"Sorry I had to bust your afternoon, Bob. I phoned the Burkes and said you couldn't get along. A queer show."

Kerr thumbed his jaw.

"Queer's the word for it. I'm hanged if I'm sure yet whether the man was a lunatic or not, but what Lois has telephoned from Camberley suggests he wasn't. So some gentlemen in Vallena—including this Mr. Kryn alias Jacobs—would like to see us dead, eh? That's more or less a point."

"More or less," smiled Craigie. "Well, they're not the first people to wish us dead, but I'm a lot more concerned with why they do."

"Any ideas?" asked Kerr.

"Plenty. Haven't you?"

Kerr scowled.

"Well, the usual round, of course. But AKA—what the deuce does AKA want to mess about with us for? A tin-pot little State which doesn't know its own mind. An unpopular puppet Prince, a play-girl Princess—"

"That's the whole thing," said Craigie, taking a meerschaum from a rack near the fireplace that contained half a dozen similar pipes. "Someone inside the State does know his—or her—own mind. That some-

one wants to upset trade relations with England, and as far as I can see have nearly succeeded in doing it. They've chosen a novel way," added Craigie with a smile. "I can imagine the thoughts of a man who orders braces and gets powder-puffs. All the same, it's the other angle that makes it more serious."

Kerr nodded. "The reports you've had from Vallena. What's the gist of them?"

Craigie stuffed his meerschaum deliberately with a tobacco mixture.

"Well—when I telephoned you earlier, they were just interesting. There's talk of a faction over in Vallena that wants to join the Hitler regime. There aren't many countries without a party like that, but Vallena's been pretty free from it up to now. The only thing Vallena's seemed really interested in is the Princess—play-girl or not."

The activities of the Princess Katrina of Vallena, had done more than anyone to make her country's name familiar. Estranged from an unpopular husband, she led a hectic life in the Casino of the World. Kerr knew that she flew her own plane; so did every man and woman able to read.

Kerr frowned. "Is this Nazi talk the only stuff you've heard?"

"There's a strong faction for linking up with the U.S.S.R.," Craigie told him, "and that looks like the real trouble. White versus Red—Democracy versus Dictatorship—mostly," added Craigie with a rare touch of bitterness; "one man's greed versus another's. They use better-sounding words, that's the real difference."

Kerr's eyes shone for a moment; Craigie rarely let himself go.

"I'm inclined to agree, but you didn't think it was necessary to send me over there because of that. Or did you?"

"Partly, partly, Bob. But chiefly because both extremist parties in Vallena have been dealing with the Associated International Industry Corporation, a beautifully high-sounding name that covers . . ."

Kerr's lips were puckering.

"Our Adam Criff, eh? That's the angle," Craigie nodded. This Mr. Adam Criff's interests seemed to follow strife, and obviously Craigie was worried lest Mr. Criff encourage strife in Vallena.

The odd thing about Criff was that he did not appear to be connected with armaments. Even in his earliest appearance, he had concentrated on foodstuffs. An odd thing was that he was young, middle-aged and increasingly popular with London and county society.

Kerr was thinking quickly.

So Craigie had had reports from agents in Baj and other places suggesting that there was a possibility of a flare-up between the two sides in Vallena, and Adam Criff—an Englishman of dubious reputation—was interested. That would be ample justification for sending his chief agent over.

"It's connected all right," he said, "and this fiddling business with English-bought merchandise has a place. I—hallo, visitors."

Nothing was heard, but in the mantelpiece a small green light glowed. Craigie took extreme—and some people thought absurd—precautions to make sure he was not approached unknowingly. Ostensibly there was no door to Department Z. Actually there were five or six, opening from different passages in the maze of Government buildings of which the office was a part, and all operated on a sliding panel principle. Perhaps it amused Craigie.

"From the street," Craigie said.

No one could press the bell outside without knowing where it was, and no one but Craigie's agents and one or two Yard men knew that. Craigie leaned forward to the fireplace, pressed a button that seemed to be part of an ornate orange tile, and both he and Kerr looked round.

Kerr jumped up quickly, as Lois Dacre entered. The door slid to as she reached him, but it was Craigie who spoke first. Even Lois Dacre could not successfully hide her excitement.

"What is it?"
"Dorienne!" said Lois simply. "I've just telephoned young Kingham. He called me half an hour after I left Horn's place. Dorienne's down there, murdered. It seems, certainly dead, and in the Horn garage. Who's coming down there with me?"

Just fifteen minutes later Mr. Wallace Davidson and Mr. Robert Carruthers, relieved from their watch at the Ribas Hotel by other agents, bundled in Carruthers' car. Carruthers was driving, and at Hyde Park Corner he saw a small car, holding Kerr and Lois Dacre.

Davidson smiled somewhat wearily. "Caught 'em, old son. Going to try and get there first?"

"Try?" snorted Carruthers. "That wreck of Bob's can't do more than seventy; it ought to be taken out of service. I wonder what's happened?"

"Plenty, or we wouldn't have to move so fast. Cancel all social arrangements, Carry. I wish we'd had time for a quick one; I'm thirsty."

"If we get well ahead we could stop at a local," said Carruthers hopefully.

Davidson looked cheered. "Know the pub?"

"The 'White Star,' Camberley."

"Good man," said Davidson with enthusiasm.

In the next traffic block he scribbled the name of the hotel on a sheet from his notebook, and Carruthers—working in perfect accord—managed to draw level with Kerr's car at a Hammersmith Broadway stoppage. Davidson flicked the note over. It struck Lois Dacre on the cheek, but she gave no sign that she had received it until some five minutes later she retrieved it from the floor.

"Any developments?" Kerr asked her.

"Probably, I—the beasts. They're stopping at a hotel in Camberley. Bob, how on earth they manage to keep going with Craigie I don't know; they must be drunk half their time."

Kerr glanced at her humorously.

"They've had practice. Don't worry about them, Lois; they always come up to scratch, and they're better if they're not thirsty. I suppose the blighters will be inside the hotel; they'll have five minutes to spare. We'll hoot 'em three times as we go past." He glanced at Lois Dacre's indignant face—she had worked once before for the Department and with Davidson, Carruthers and others, but she had not managed to understand the peculiar nature of Craigie's band of young, hearty and energetic agents. They had a habit of acting the fool, more particularly when there was trouble—sometimes spelt danger—in the office.

"I suppose I'll get to know them," she said, but she looked doubtful.

"They'll make you," chuckled Kerr.

Not knowing the wrath that had called down on their heads, Carruthers and Davidson made the run to the White Star, Camberley, eight minutes faster than Kerr. Time, in fact, for two "quick ones." They were actually outside again before the other

car appeared, and true to policy Davidson merely winked an eye in recognition. The speed limit being operative just there, Lois saw the wink, and had to smile.

Moving with an apparent lethargy that was deceptive, Davidson reached the car before Carruthers. And a small red-faced man in a disgustingly blue suit reached an innocent-looking roadster before them. The man in the blue suit—although it was not quite dark outside and they could only see his car's rear-light—appeared to have no connection with Department Z, but he took the same turnings towards Lane House. The road was a poor one, unlikely to carry much traffic.

Davidson had forgotten his beer.

"Object for suspicion," he said. "I

The man with the red face and the blue suit ceased to be simply an object of suspicion. He reeked suspicion, for he gave them a superb demonstration of ace driving, squeezed past, forcing Kerr's car well over, and as he went past, swung round in his seat.

Carruthers saw the start of the mad drive, and promptly switched on his headlights. In the glare they could see the little man with an automatic in his left hand and his right hand on the wheel. But for Davidson's thirst Lois Dacre and Bob Kerr would certainly have had little interest in life thereafter. As it was, there remained an element of doubt.

For Davidson swore and his hand flew to his pocket as flame came from the little man's gun. For a moment there was uproar, and as Carruthers jammed on his brakes he had a horrible feeling that he heard Lois Dacre scream.

In the glare of his headlights the whole scene was bizarrely clear. The little man shooting, Kerr wrenching at his wheel to keep the car on all fours, Lois Dacre ducking—or falling—below the level of the windscreen and the little man in the blue suit suddenly aware that the second carload of men was working with Kerr. It seemed to terrify him.

He loosed his remaining bullets wildly, and dropped down to the steering, but he might as well have pulled up at once. Davidson, still going fast and seeming slow, aimed for the rear wheels.

One rear tyre and then the other burst with a roar that seemed like dynamite. The little man in hideous blue seemed to realise there was no hope of driving off, but some chance of getting away without hurt. Before his car had stopped he jumped for the hedge, and Carruthers saw him scrambling over.

"Get him!" he snapped.

Davidson was taking no chances of missing—or killing—his man. With the car rocking as it came to a standstill, he was not sure of his aim. The legs of the little man were the only things in sight when he did fire, twice in quick succession.

There was no doubt about a scream then.

With a bullet in each leg the man stopped scrambling. He was yelling with pain and fright, and was perched helplessly on top of the hedge. A ludicrous sight, and Davidson grinned.

"What a picture! I'll get him."

Carruthers was already hurrying towards the small car. With the headlights still illuminating the scene, he saw Lois straighten up, looking anxiously at Kerr. Kerr was reciprocating. Carruthers pulled up by their car and beamed.

"Foxing, eh? I'm disgusted with you, Miss Dacre. I'd started the obituary. Fiancée of famous air-ace hurt—sorry—

killed—in road smash, and I'd collect a bit for the exclusive story. You all right?"

Lois looked at him scathingly.

"What a crazy fool you are! Yes—I don't think my hat's any more use, though."

It was not. It was one of those saucer-like affairs, Carruthers said, worn slant-wise on the head, and two bullets had decorated it with small round holes. That had been closer than Carruthers liked, and his good spirits were damped a little.

Kerr was not smiling; his grimness was alarming.

"Little rat! Good thing you were behind, Carry."

"Good thing Wally was thirsty, or we'd have been in front," Carruthers said. "Red Face didn't think we were in it, and expected us just to find the bodies. Quick work, eh?"

They were all out of the cars now. But the point of main interest was Wally Davidson. That large and lazy gentleman was stretching up as far as he could and grabbing at the little man with the red face.

Davidson had him down at last, and the man seemed too scared to wriggle. Davidson tucked him under his left arm, head to the front, and reached the other trio.

"Here it is," he said with disgust. "It uses scent."

"They don't supply it in jug," commented Carruthers. "Sit him on the running-board and let's look him over."

Kerr broke in almost sharply.

"There's time later for that. Run through his pockets, Bob, and see what he's carrying. Wally, we've got to lift the roadster over this side of the road, and get past. We're wanted up the lane."

"Navying now," groaned Davidson.

Lois stood aside, breathing harder than usual, as they bent their backs to the job of lifting the car. Then a thoughtful quartet and a badly frightened gunman who had forgotten the pain in his legs and was wondering what these hard-faced but oddly flippant men were going to do with him, were loaded into the big car, and Carruthers drove through the gap.

"Anyone know how much farther?"

"Half a mile or a little more," Lois said. "It gets narrower, and there are some nasty turns."

"Nice place for a learner," said Carruthers, but no one replied to the quip. There was more than enough to be thoughtful about, without asides.

Kerr thought more quickly than any of the others, and he saw things significant enough to worry him. Red Face must have been waiting for their arrival at Camberley, and recognised them when they had passed the White Star. Not so good. But he had not recognised Davidson nor Carruthers, well-known members of the department, which suggested that only Kerr had been identified.

And then there were other things to be cleared up. Adam Griff's part in this game. Kryn—whoever he was. And the reason for Dorienne's presence at the house of Mr. Matthew Horn certainly needed explaining.

Kerr made his report to Craigie five hours later. Lois had gone home, to bed, and the other two were resting off, but every available agent on Craigie's list had been warned to prepare for action.

The local police had been told of Kerr's coming, and had not been annoyed at the way he had taken control of the situation. Freddie Kingham, Matthew Horn, and the other members of the household, including Joshua Kingham, had been interrogated.

As far as Kerr had been able to judge, none of them had expected Doriennet at the house. Horn's statement appeared straightforward, and the servants, Kerr said, all seemed safe. The only one who might be worth watching was the butler, Bennet. Bennet had been almost too perfect in everything he did. Kerr suspected perfection, always looking for the flaw.

"In short," said Kerr, cocking his leg up on the mantelpiece and yawning, "there seems a reasonable chance that the poor devil of a Vallonian was going to Horn for help and was murdered on the way. But there's another implication, Gordon. Kryn—we'll say he's our man for the sake of a name—might have wanted Doriennet to be found at Lane House, to make things awkward for Matthew Horn."

Craigie pursed his lips.

"Possibly. At all events, the aeroplane that took Doriennet from Heston landed at Farnham, according to the pilot, at Doriennet's urgent request."

"Pilot all right?"

"He seems water-tight."

"Did Doriennet seem worried?"

"Fidgety, according to the pilot," said Craigie. "After they'd landed at Farnham, Doriennet took a taxi from the station as far as the end of Lane House drive. The taximan says he was told exactly where to stop."

Kerr whistled at that.

"Which means Doriennet had been in England before."

"I don't think he told all the truth," said Craigie. "And he had a definite reason for wanting to visit Horn. Either for help or—and that's as far as we can go."

"Seems to implicate Horn," Kerr said. "Who's watching him?"

"Dodo Trale."

"Dodo will be tired before the day's out," smiled Kerr. But he did not feel like smiling, for there were far too many complications in the affair for his liking. Silence dropped on them for some minutes. Kerr was trying to see through a blank wall, without any success.

He scowled when he remembered Doriennet's love of life and the pitiful figure of the man bundled into a corner of the garage at Lane House. The poor blighter had been so sure of his arrangements, too. Kerr tackled that angle, aloud:

"Gordon, Doriennet had made plans, and he went directly to Horn's place. Suggesting—"

"Horn was going to help him. We get to that again."

"Yes—and Horn denies it. Says he hadn't expected to see the man, and had never seen him before."

"We'll try to find when Doriennet was last in England," Craigie said, tapping out his pipe. "I wouldn't trust Horn too far, on the surface. But the little fellow you managed to catch, Bob—that's significant."

"Red Face." Kerr screwed up his nose. "We'll—I'd put him down simply as a hired killer. Told where to go, and what to do with me. Whoever sent him guessed I'd be in the Lane House direction soon after Doriennet's death was discovered."

Craigie nodded.

"Suggesting they knew he'd been to see you."

"They knew that all right—or Mr. Kryn did," said Kerr. "Unless I'm a long way out in my reckoning, Kryn knew I followed him, and knows he's being watched now. You're not thinking of hauling him in and trying to make him talk?"

"Not yet," Craigie said. "He won't get lost, and he might lead us somewhere useful. He's better where he is, as Mr. Jacobs at the Ritz. A pity Fencer won't—or can't—talk."

Kerr's face looked very bleak.

He had spent half an hour at Lane House with the little red-faced man in the blue suit, whose legs were holed with Davidson's bullets, and who had admitted to the name of Fencer. He was, he said, a hired gunman. He had spent some time in America, been shot out, and wandered through the Continent before being hired to go to England. The letter hiring him had not been signed, but the postmark had been Paris.

He had been ordered to burn all letters after receiving them, he had obeyed, and he swore he had committed no other shooting offences in England.

"I'm prepared to swear he didn't know anything more," said Kerr. "I gave him a swine of a gruel and he was almost crazy when I'd finished. Nothing he's done will help us—excepting that Kryn lacks at least one gunman."

Craigie, who knew that Kerr could carry out an interrogation that would make most men pale, was satisfied.

"It's disappointing, but we can't expect too much. I don't think you'd better go to Vallonia yet—there looks like work to be done over here. But you might see what you can find about Adam Criff. I can tell you that he has booked an Airways seat for Poland, leaving to-morrow."

"It's an odd fact," said Bob Kerr with a crooked smile, "but I was thinking about Adam myself. Lois doesn't seem to be known in this show yet. Now, if Criff wanted a secretary—"

"Think up a new one," smiled Craigie, and he yawned—an unusual thing, for he rarely seemed tired. "Be careful, Bob. There'll be another packet of reports in the morning, and if you phone through I'll be able to pass the gist of them on. Good night."

Mr. Adam Criff had not slept at all on the Sunday night.

Nor did two other gentlemen, obviously of non-English extraction, who were with him that night in his Park Lane flat.

Gregoroff Shirin, as his name suggested, was a Russian. A White Russian, he allowed it to be said with some pride. He was tall, face clean-shaven, hair close cropped, and even dressed in an English-cut lounge suit he gave the impression that he belonged to the back of a horse.

Karl von Haut was an entirely different type of man to look at. No one knew where the "von" had come from. He was fat, short, inclined to be greasy and over-paunched, and his eyes were little brown berries buried in florid flesh. He talked very little, and when he did he leaped.

Their discussion this particular night was one involving risk, and Shirin was urging madness and von Haut appealing for caution that was equivalent to stagnancy. Criff might have shown his irritation but for the announcement from a tired valet-butler that her ladyship had called.

Criff, taller than the average man and with an unenviable reputation in several ways, started to his feet in surprise.

"Lady Mondell?"

"Yes, sir, she—"

But Purkiss, Criff's man, went no further. Lady Mondell entered the room, without fuss or abruptness but with singular grace. She was a startlingly beautiful woman, and

had Shirin out of his chair and bowing low, with von Haut gazing goggle-eyed, even at five o'clock in the morning.

"My dear Rene . . ."

Lady Mondell waved her hand. She looked almost contemptuous, and a single glance sufficed for each of the others.

"You're a fine fool, Adam."

"A—fool!" Van Haut gasped the echo; Criff looked taken aback, and only Shirin saw an expression in Lady's eyes that told him she was hiding alarm.

She stripped her gloves off slowly.

"A fool, I said. Otherwise—there wouldn't be one of Craigie's men at the back, and one at the front. Understand that, Adam. Craigie's men. They're watching you, they've found Doriennet, they've caught Fencer, and Kerr's safe. And . . ." She hesitated; her poise of coolness dropped away, and she took three short sharp steps towards the trio, her hands outstretched and her eyes hazel pools of fear. "What are we going to do—what are we going to do? They've caught us!"

Shirin's fresh-colored face went fresher and his hands clenched at his sides. Von Haut uttered a sound that was more squeak than groan, and perspiration came unbidden to his forehead. For both of them knew something of the power of Department Z.

Criff knew as much if not more, and after the moment of strained silence following the woman's words his laugh came like a douche of cold water.

"Most melodramatic, my dear Rene. I thought you had some bad news."

"Bad news? Why, my poor—"

"Fool, you've said it twice," murmured Criff. He took her elbow in the palm of his broad white hand and urged her towards Shirin's seat. The Russian jumped up, and remembered himself well enough to bow, but von Haut was speaking jerkily, his voice higher than usual.

"But, Criff—Criff! Vat vill happen? I must say Lady Mondell seems wise, yet, I—"

"Be quiet!" snapped Criff, and there was an alteration in his expression and his voice that sent von Haut back into his chair abruptly. "Do you want me to panic in a bad moment? Shirin, stop moving."

Shirin stopped pacing the room, but despite half-hearted defiance, his fear was as transparent as the others.

"Well—since you are so brave—so clever—"

Adam Criff stared at him, and then he laughed lightly.

"What idiots we are! You were right, Rene, I'm a fool. I get alarmed and sharp-tongued over a little thing like this, when there is nothing at all to worry about. Apologies, my dear! Shirin, help yourself—and von Haut—to whisky." He took a long, thin cigarette case from his pocket, proffered it to the woman, and then lit both cigarettes.

Peace seemed to fall over the quartet, a peace ruffled only by the knowledge in all their minds that the Department men were outside.

Lady Mondell broke the silence.

"So now we'll all friends again, Adam, what are you going to do?"

Criff was swaying to and fro on his feet. "Well—it is not so hard. Fencer, you say, is caught? But he knows nothing, and can do no harm. Doriennet has been found. Why not? They had to find him somewhere—was he with Horn, by any chance?"

"No. Fencer shot him near the garage."

"But on Horn's premises, eh? Excellent."

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work, excellent! Nothing at all points towards us, and of course we have had nothing to do with Fencer or anyone else who would take the law lightly in his hands." As people who did not take to him often said, Criff liked to hear his own voice, and it was hardly pleasant enough to warrant the use of it had. "So, apart from the fact that I am suspected of—shall we say?—interest in Valleria, what is there to worry about? You see how easy it is to panic, my dear? I wonder—yes, I wonder how long they've been there?"

Lady Mondell tapped ash thoughtfully into a tray.

"Since about three o'clock, as far as Martin—Martin was the night porter—can tell me. I—I recognised him immediately, and I went round to the courtyard to see if there was anyone there. There was—a big man named Loftus. None of Craigie's special agents are there, though."

Criff looked pleased at that disclosure. "I thought so. Simple curiosity. And to Shirlin and von Hauf came here with the utmost caution at ten o'clock last night, no one is likely to know they are here now. You both came the back way?"

He glanced towards Shirlin and von Hauf, and they nodded with the alacrity of well-handled puppets. Criff's smile grew even more complacent.

Probably no one had seen his two visitors, for they had come through the servants' doors, and after the momentary scare that had made him lose his temper Criff felt cheerful enough.

"Excellent," he said, and not for the first time. "Von Hauf, you will go first—the back way. Shirlin, you are better known in London, and you will go next. Should—no, should anyone question you, say you have been with Lady Mondell! It is an excellent idea!"

Rene Mondell sat up sharply.

"What?"

"You will do exactly what you're told," Criff said to Shirlin. "Should there be questions—even friendly questions—say that. Perhaps it would be a good idea to visit the all-night cafe in Oxford Street. You might be followed and asked questions. And to-morrow—there must be no more mistakes with Kerr. He is dangerous; I do not know of a man I fear more. You understand, all of you?"

Shirlin nodded. Von Hauf was by the door, and at a nod from Criff he pushed through, obese, worried and trembling.

Criff chuckled, but he was courteous itself as he turned to Rene, while the front door closed behind Gregaroff Shirlin. "And now, my dear, you must be tired. You have been a long time getting back from Surrey?"

Rene hesitated before she spoke, although she nodded quickly.

"Yes, it was beastly, Adam. And, of course, I waited in the hope that Fencer would get away."

Criff nodded, well pleased.

"Now get along to your flat, to bed."

Lady Mondell was nervous, and not without reason, for she had lied when she had told Criff that she had come straight back from Camberley.

Actually she had been to her flat, on the ground floor, two hours before she had visited Criff's, and before that she had spent an hour riding in a taxi with a man named Faling.

Faling was a little younger than Rene Mondell, and somewhat unhappily in love with her. But he had, she knew, something to distract him at times. Work that he had

started a few months before for Craigie and Department Z.

Rene Mondell had learned that when she had visited him once, to find Bob Kerr and Carruthers with him. But she had never disclosed this friendship with Faling to Adam Criff. Had it been in the way of business, of course, Criff would have been delighted, but—

She fell asleep thinking of the cheerful blue eyes and the fair, curly hair of broad-shouldered, easy-speaking Jim Faling, that most recent member of Department Z.

And ten minutes after she fell asleep the telephone on Gordon Craigie's desk burred out. Craigie, who had been dozing in his easy chair, was alert in a moment. He lifted the receiver, and the man at the other end of the wire spoke quickly, spelling his name backwards, an introduction that proved he was genuine; it was the ruling Department code.

"Craigie? GNILLAF speaking. All right?"

"Yes, Faling," said the Chief of Department Z.

Rene Mondell's just left Criff's flat—she's been there half an hour. Shirlin, a Russian cove, came out ten minutes before her. No one seems to have seen him go in. Ashe, at the back, says a moneylender named von Hauf left that way. That's the lot."

"Good work," said Craigie.

He hesitated, for he fancied he detected an unusual note—one almost of reluctance—in the other man's voice. But Faling said nothing more, and Craigie told him to go off duty.

Faling, at a call-box at Marble Arch station, rang down and then walked slowly into the street.

He was frowning, and he felt miserable.

When he had first been told to keep an eye on Lady Mondell—not because of her association with Criff, but because she had been so frequently in foreign capitals at times which were difficult diplomatically, and Craigie's foreign agents had of course reported it—he had not imagined it would be much of a job. A bit of fooling with a blonde, and no more.

But Rene Mondell was not the usual type of blonde.

And Jim Faling was beginning to realise that he was really, not feignedly, in love with her. It was a deuce of a business.

Had he been wise he would have told Craigie the truth, but he had not been able to bring himself to it.

As he reached his flat in Jermyn Street, a little man remarkably like Fencer, who was now in Camberley gaol, hurried along the other side of the road. Fencer's double, whose name was Platt, did not trouble to try to work everything out. He told himself he had a lot to report next morning to a certain gentleman who would telephone him.

At eleven o'clock next morning, after he had telephoned the man named Platt, Adam Criff had discovered that Rene was playing fast and loose with him.

His first temptation was to tell her so, and put fear into her as he had never done before. On reflection, however, he believed he could twist this development to his advantage. It needed his personal attention, he decided, and he cancelled his Polish flight—thereby making Craigie ponder when the fact was discovered in the normal routine of Department Z.

Then he sent out an order to Platt to get the man Faling, alive, and to take

him to a small house in Essex, which had been bought and kept for such emergencies. Platt was told by telephone that he could take two other men to help him, and how to go about it.

Thus it was that two hours later Jim Faling—off duty for the day, for Craigie believed in resting his younger men where possible—had a call from a tall, well-dressed man with an obviously professional manner.

Faling looked at his caller inquiringly. "Lady Mondell asked me to call," said the professional-looking gentleman with a disarming smile. "If you could call at her flat some time to-day she would appreciate it. A slight accident—"

The professional-looking one, whose name was Giddy at Grattle Street, Harrow, had a convincing manner, and yet he had some difficulty in keeping his elation from showing in his eyes. Young Faling fell so easily. Giddy, who professed to be Lady Mondell's medical adviser and confidant, suggested it would not be wise for Mr. Faling to visit her for an hour, as he believed that Sir Douglass Mondell was with her. It was all beautifully convincing.

Jim Faling heard the door close, stepped sharply to the window, and watched Giddy walk quickly along the street. He fidgeted with his hands and his hair, eyed the telephone longingly and then, with sudden decision, grabbed his hat and left his flat.

Just an hour and ten minutes later a comely maid admitted him to Lady Mondell's flat. It was smaller than Criff's, but luxuriously furnished, reflecting the exclusive if not exotic taste of Lady Mondell.

"How is she?" Faling asked sharply.

The maid swallowed hard, but Faling apparently noticed nothing amiss.

"She—she asked you to go straight in, sir."

Faling nodded, and let the girl lead him to a bedroom door. When it was open he could see the figure of a woman—presumably—beneath the clothes; the door so opened that only the foot of the bed was visible first.

And then Jim Faling pulled himself up short; but he had no time to do a single thing. Just behind the door was the professional-looking Giddy. In one corner of the room, training a gun on Faling, was Mr. Tino Platt; and from the bed appeared the tumbled and ungainly figure of a crook named Jo—Flash Jo to those privileged ones who knew him well.

"What the devil's this?" snapped Faling. He no longer looked youthful and cheerful, but his eyes were narrow and his fists had doubled pugnaciously. "Where—where's Lady Mondell?"

Giddy laughed, highly amused.

"See what happens when young sparks like you fiddle around with married skirts, Mister Faling. You—"

"Cut it," said Tino Platt, his accent proving he had spent some time improving his education in America. "Put de coon on de guy, Giddy; we ain't got no time fer shooting his mouth offen him."

"Look here—" began Faling, then slumped under a blow from a shot-filled leather implement deftly and unexpectedly wielded by Giddy.

Tino, who had one gold tooth and several that were badly discolored, grinned and rubbed a broken nose.

"Say, would you believe it? So easy I reckon we oughta ap-pologise, Giddy. Let's git de guy outside."

It was not difficult for them to make it appear that Jim Faling was either drunk

or ill. They reached the outside of the block of flats, and Flash Jo jumped to the door of a saloon car which was standing there. Far more quickly than they had moved upstairs, they had falling in the tonneau. Tino Platt joined him, Jo took the wheel, and Giddy watched the car drive off before turning towards the nearest telephone kiosk.

He saw, but did not specially notice, the battered-looking old car that rattled past in the wake of the saloon. He did not see the driver, five minutes later, lift two fingers towards a man at the wheel of a small roadster.

Bob Kerr, driving the roadster, saw the signal, and his eyes turned towards the saloon. He followed it through London as far as Loughton and the first fringes of Epping Forest. Then he pulled into the courtyard of the Swan Inn, and the driver of the saloon, who had noticed the smaller car, and had started to wonder, grew more cheerful.

"O.K., he's stopped," he said to Tino.

"Shore," said Tino. Neither of them realised that as the roadster had gone off the trail two other following cars—both small saloons—had taken it up. It was too easy, Kerr thought as he watched them pass.

He thought back to the hour before the chase had started.

Carruthers, Davidson and the others would have sady misjudged Jim Felling by recommending dismissal. The new Department agent had grown suspicious after the call from the professional-looking Giddy, and had gone to see Kerr, and blurted out the whole affair.

Kerr, of course, had told him how to act, but he had been worried about the youngster.

As he waited for a message at the Swan he was thinking that at least six men he had known, grown friendly with, joked, eaten and worked with, had died in the past eighteen months. Older, better, cleverer men than Felling, and all had died for the Department.

Some twenty minutes after he had pulled in, a policeman entered the saloon bar and looked about him.

"Mr. Kerr?"

"That's right," said Kerr, with his sudden flash of a smile.

"Oh—thank you, sir. I've just had a radio call, sir, asking you to go to Edge House, Elmwick, sir."

Kerr's eyes narrowed. The constable, as it happened, was able to give him explicit directions, and he reached Edge House fifteen minutes after he had received the message.

Two other agents were waiting in the shadows of a copse of trees conveniently near. Edge House had obviously earned its name because it was on the edge of the common. It stood half a mile from the village and half a mile from the nearest house or habitation. Even in the hot glow of that September afternoon sun it looked dark, gloomy and sombre.

"Anyone come in or out?" asked Kerr. A fresh-faced young man said "no." Kerr nodded, and gave instructions before walking boldly towards the short but curved drive of Edge House, without at first being able to see the building. There were times when direct approach was advisable, and Kerr believed that this was one of them.

Conscious and with a badly aching head, Jim Felling was sitting on a couch in an upstairs room of a house that seemed to him ominously remote from civilisation.

Opposite him Tino Platt was showing those bad teeth and that single gold ornament.

"Lissen, buddy, jus' you stay put an' you won't come to no 'arm. Dat's a promise." Tino leered. "De boss wantster talk to you, an' arter that I reckon you'n de lady c'n make a flit—that's may be. So—"

"You'll suffer for this!" snapped Felling, and he was not entirely acting a part, although he felt the melodrama of the words. He had not realised it was possible to be as scared as he was while the little red-faced and villainous-looking gunman leered at him.

"Sure, I'll suffer," grinned Tino. "Only I ain't worryin', mister."

Felling, his hands and feet bound tightly as he leaned against the wall, licked his dry lips.

"Who's the swine who's paying you for this?"

"Now ain't that too bad?" drawled Tino. "He wants ter know who de boss is! Maybe he'll tell you. I—"

Tino, whose mentality was of the type to appreciate the humor of playing with a helpless prisoner, broke off as there came the sudden strident ringing of the telephone bell downstairs. Seeing that the house had been unoccupied—but furnished—when they had arrived, it was something of a surprise. Tino stepped back, shut the door and hurried down. Flash Jo was holding the receiver in his hand as he stood in the small gloomy hallway.

"It's him, Tino."

"De boss? Reckon he's aimin' t'know whether we got de guy," said Tino, not without surprise. He took the instrument and announced himself. The calm voice of "the boss," pitched on a higher key than Griff usually used, came quickly. Tino's commonplace disappeared, and Tino's little eyes were widened to their fullest extent.

"You were followed," said Griff. "Put him away, and get off yourselves. And move quickly."

"O.K.," said Tino Platt mildly. But he was not looking mild as he swung from the telephone towards Flash Jo.

"Get de car from the garage. An' make it hum. Dere's tailers on us."

"Tail-ers!" Jo looked startled and turned pale. He hurried through the house towards the garage, where he had just put the car to bed until further orders, while Tino Platt raced upstairs towards Felling's door.

He flung it open with his left hand and snatched his automatic from his right-shoulder holster. Felling, who had been trying desperately to loosen the cords, saw that Red Face twisted in savage anger, and was suddenly, dreadfully afraid. Pictures of Kerr, Rene, Craigie, and a dozen others flashed through his mind as Platt flicked the gun.

And then Felling drew himself up with a queer dignity. He knew what was coming. His lips were steady as Tino's fingers lightened and relaxed, three times, and death was at least instantaneous for the youngest member of Department Z.

Tino reached the hall when the car was at the front door with Flash Jo at the wheel. The back door was open. Tino jumped towards it, his gun still showing.

And as the car moved off Bob Kerr was opening the drive gate. The bend in the drive hid the oncoming car from sight, but Kerr heard the engine and drew a little to one side.

Jo saw him first, Tino a split second later. Kerr saw the tense expression on a

face that could only be called simian. He moved, faster than it seemed possible that a man could move, towards the shelter of the trees, and as he did so bullets began to spray from Tino and Flash Jo. Bullets splattered on the trees, and in the grass; one tugged at Kerr's coat-sleeve as he levelled his own gun arm. He fired three times, at the wheels and not the men.

He saw the car veer towards him, heard the explosion as the tyres punctured, and Jo swung them in the opposite direction to try and keep the car on all four wheels.

Kerr saw the driver working desperately to keep control, but a man in the back was still shooting. At the same moment the two Department men who had gone towards the rear of the house broke cover.

But Kerr hardly needed them.

Tino Platt, his eyes blazing as he swayed to keep his balance, fired his last shot, and then opened a door to run for it as Kerr fired again. Tino fell heavily, then lay still.

Jo began to realise that it was useless. He saw death in the wooden face of that man standing in the trees, and his blood turned to water. He tugged at the brakes, and Kerr saw his hands go up as the two assistants drew gear.

Kerr knew that part of his job was over; one prisoner, anyhow, and he might talk. But Felling . . .

He snapped his orders and then started to run towards the house. Three minutes afterwards he pushed open the door of the second-floor room where Felling was lying; and he stood very still on the threshold. Then he swore, coldly and slowly.

Mr. Adam Griff, millionaire adventurer whose money was made mostly from wars, was sitting in his easiest chair and scowling. There was little of the debonaire man-about-town in his expression. He was waiting for the telephone to ring, with a message from Platt, and it would not happen.

He had already phoned Grattle Street, to learn that Platt had not returned.

Griff was beginning to feel anxious.

He had sent Lady Mondell over to Paris, to make sure she was out of the way while he started handling Felling. She would be back by air the next morning, and if Felling had proved obstinate about talking, and telling what he knew of the Department's activities, Griff would have used the woman.

But Felling was dead.

Griff wished now that he had not given those instructions.

He had always disliked admitting it, but there were those people who could give him orders that he had to obey. He knew little of their personnel, and he had heard nothing from them that day. But he had learned that both von Hauf and Shirin had left England hurriedly, obviously because of orders from that higher command. It worried and harassed him. It was rare that the orders were not passed on through him, and it suggested that the higher command was beginning to lose faith in his ability.

He heard a ring at the door-bell, and started.

His man's footsteps were deadened by a thick carpet, but he heard the murmur of voices, and then silence. Purkins was coming into his room. Someone had called, and—

The door opened, and for the first time Griff and Kerr were face to face.

Griff tried to speak but could not.

He felt a surge of fear such as he had never known before, and his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth. Kerr's silence was uncanny. That wooden, forceful face. Those grey eyes, neither narrowed nor widened, but deadly. Criff was beginning to tremble; the tension was unbearable; if Kerr didn't speak he would shout, he would—

Kerr broke the silence abruptly. "Well, Criff, I wonder what it's like to be hung?"

Criff's stomach seemed to turn over. Words came in an overwhelming spate, thick and incoherent.

"Hung—hung—don't be a fool! Who are you? What do you mean by coming here? What—"

"Or to be shot—three times—and see death coming." Kerr went on in that low, slow, merciless voice. "I wonder which death you'd prefer, Criff?"

Criff was craned, filled with a dreadful fear. Kerr knew.

"You—you're talking nonsense; I don't know what—" His hands were trembling as he put them towards his pocket. There was a gun there, a small automatic fitting snugly against his waist. Kerr's hands were in sight, and Criff prayed that he could reach his gun before Kerr saw his move.

Kerr went on:

"You're a murdering swine, Criff. Falling was killed at your orders; I'm lucky to have escaped. You killed Doriennet and you've probably killed others. I could forgive you but for Falling—"

Criff's hand was in his pocket. He could feel the cold steel of the gun, but his fingers were trembling too much to find the trigger.

"We caught two of your men, we've unearthed Grattle Street, and we've found that you phoned orders—"

Criff thought he had the gun ready and he actually squeezed the trigger. But Kerr was no longer standing in front of him; Kerr had moved towards the window, and had slipped his hand in and out of his pocket like lightning. As he said "fool" there was the slightest of smiles on his face.

Criff felt a bullet bite like a red-hot poker through the fleshy part of his right arm. He screamed, louder than the subdued report of the shot, and drew his hand out of his pocket sharply. The gun stayed where it was. Kerr's gun was showing, glinting as coldly as his eyes.

"I wanted you to try for a gun, Criff; it gave me an excellent chance of making you know what it's like to be shot at. Now—start talking. Stop there, and start talking! If you don't, the next shot will be fatal."

Criff's jaws were working. The man meant it. That dreadful, frightening stare, that harsh, clipped voice. Kerr was serious—serious!

"You—you daren't! It's murder; you can't do it; you—"

Kerr breathed slowly as he stepped towards the millionaire. Criff backed away, but Kerr gripped his uninjured shoulder, and pushed him down in his chair.

"Deaf, Criff? Listen. I know what orders were given to Doriennet. I know that you are partly responsible for the wrong shipments from Vallena to England. I know that you arranged for Falling to die, for me to die, and I know that you killed Doriennet. Fencer fired the shot, but you killed him. What I don't know is why

it's happening, but I'm going to. If I have to kill you by inches, I'm going to."

"All right—all right! I'll tell you. I—"

Kerr released his hold, stood over the millionaire, and nodded. "Make it the truth."

Criff was at such a peak of terror and pain that it did not occur to him to lie. Kerr knew that. But as he listened he experienced an overwhelming disappointment, because Criff did not know a great deal.

"Kerr—Kerr—I'm only one. Only one! I get orders—from—abroad. Several—countries. The trick with the Vallena stuff was—"

Kerr heard him out. He was sure that Criff was telling everything he knew, and the sense of disappointment was greater than ever when the millionaire, gasping, pain-racked and terror-stricken, finished and flopped back in his chair. Kerr felt a sudden pity for the man. He turned round, found the whisky and poured out a strong measure. Criff had hardly the strength to lift it to his lips, but Kerr left him to it and went to the door. He had finished with Criff for the time being, and Carruthers and Davidson were in the next room and could carry on.

Kerr opened the door.

He opened it slowly, by habit, and what he saw was like a blow in the face.

He caught a glimpse of Wally Davidson stretched out on the carpet, and there was blood coming from Davidson's neck. As his eyes took in the picture he saw also the man who was standing in the window-recess of the first room, holding something in his hand that looked like a black tennis ball.

Kerr saw him very clearly.

He was abnormally tall—six feet and a half at least—and he lobbed the tennis ball towards the door. But he lobbed it a fraction of a second too late to be really effective.

As the bomb crashed against the wood-work, Kerr had slammed the door to and jumped backwards. The explosion shook the walls of the flat, set the pictures rattling, and smashed the windows, but it did no more than knock Kerr breathless, render him semi-conscious. He was alert enough, though, to find his gun and to stay on the floor, with the gun trained towards the door.

It was smashed inwards, he could see through the smoke and flame. He just saw the far door close and the tall man disappear, and he swore as he jumped up.

A moment later he dropped down again, wincing.

Something had gone wrong with his right foot. It would not hold him. Kerr grimaced as he dragged himself up slowly, holding on to an overturned chair as the smoke lessened and the flames grew thicker. He knew it was useless to try and get at Mr. Kryn.

Through that crack in the door he saw something else.

Flames had started to run along the walls of the room beyond. They were running far too fast for it to be the result of the bomb, and Kerr could even see the trickle of liquid—petrol or paraffin—as yet untouched by the flames. And Davidson, Carruthers and the servant Purkiss were in that room, which would be an inferno in less than five minutes.

Kerr, close to the table, grabbed the telephone and pushed it towards Criff.

"Phone the fire-brigade," he snapped. "Give the fire-alarm—"

He paused long enough to take the gun out of Criff's pocket, for safety, and then started to hobble towards the door. The heat of the flames in the room beyond was already overpowering, and his face was bleak as he reached the door and pulled it open.

Davidson and Carruthers were both stretched out. They might be dead or alive. The servant—

"Gone," muttered Kerr, hardly knowing what he was saying or doing as he reached Carruthers—nearer that creeping fire than Davidson. "One of—them, of course. One of— Carry, don't act the fool!"

Carruthers, unconscious at least and a dead-weight, seemed to be pulling hard against Kerr. But Kerr was jerking himself up. He knew he was perilously near delirium; the shock of the explosion and being blown down had been more than he had realised. Grimacing at the pain in his right ankle, he hugged Carruthers clear of the flames, towards the door of Criff's room.

Then back for Davidson, with the smoke choking him and the flames singeing his hair.

Thank heaven, Wally was alive; his eyes flickered open.

"Watch—the valet."

"Crawl—for the door," gasped Kerr, and for once could not but admire the dogged spirit of his friend.

Davidson had strength enough. Kerr, sweating, gasping, almost crying, managed to lug Carruthers into Criff's room. Davidson, on his hands and knees, reached the door and then collapsed again.

The roaring of the flames was like distant thunder. Kerr gulped in the cleaner air, and then saw Criff, sitting still, with the telephone in front of him. Criff was staring blankly ahead of him. The telephone receiver was in his right hand, and it did not move.

Criff was dead.

Kerr stared at him stupidly, seeing the bullet-hole in the side of his neck. He had been shot through the open window, and had wedged between his chair and the desk so that he had not fallen. Kerr felt sick.

And then heard the crackling in the instrument. He half fell towards the receiver, and lifted it.

A girl's voice came sharply to his ears.

"What is it—what's the trouble there?"

"Fire," Kerr gasped. "Fire—and police! Superintendent—Miller. Fire—fire—fire—"

Superintendent Horace Miller, of Scotland Yard, was a stolid representative of all that was best in the C.I.D. He rarely grew excited, as rarely angry.

On that September afternoon he was sitting in his office and frowning. Frowning because he had just been warned by the Chief Commissioner, Sir William Fellowes, that he was to stand by to help Craigie and Department Z. He had hoped for three or four days' easy going, but nothing was ever easy with the department.

The telephone rang and Miller took the receiver off its hook promptly. It was one of the old-fashioned type.

"Superintendent Miller," he grunted.

"This is the Mayfair Exchange, Superintendent. We have just had a call of fire from 191 Devennet Court. A man who did not give his name asked us to advise you . . . yes, the fire-brigade has been advised. "Thanks," grunted Miller, and banged the receiver down.

He stood up, smoothed his lapels, took a hat from its peg and pressed the bell for a servant. One Martin, looking half Miller's size, met him at the door.

"Get your hat and come with me," said Miller. "I'll be in my car."

Ten minutes later Miller saw the smoke coming from the windows of one side of Devennet Court. He swore as he saw the crowd, went as far through it in the car as he dared, braked and jumped out, running as fast as his sixteen stone would allow him. He did not know who had sent that message to the Exchange but this was Criff's address, and it would certainly have been one of the Department men.

Miller, pushing his way towards Webb—the brigade captain—saw an escape was up against one window. He glimpsed a helmet glistening in the sun and then the rear of a fireman starting out of the window for the top rung. Over the man's shoulder was a limp body.

A billow of smoke hid the rescue from sight. Miller, his heart thumping, grabbed Webb's arm.

The brigade captain swung round angrily. "Get to — Oh! Sorry, Miller, I thought it was a reporter. Nasty show."

"Anyone down yet?"

Webb, middle-aged, grizzled and sceptical, grunted.

"One—but he's dead. A job for you, because he wasn't burned to death. Over there."

Webb shouted further instructions to his men, and out of the corner of his eyes Miller saw the fireman coming down the escape, almost at the bottom. He hesitated between going to see who it was and visiting the dead man; the latter won, and he reached Webb.

The captain was gripping the shoulder of a small, round-faced man whose scowling pugnaciousness would have amused Miller at a different moment.

"Listen, I've told you twice to keep off. You're like a jackal—clear off!"

The man grunted. He looked sulky, and Miller had time to wonder whether he was a very young cub thinking he had found a real scoop.

Then he reached the outstretched body.

"Good lord!" exclaimed Miller aloud.

"Criff!"

Webb, still grumbling about young cubs,

glanced at him inquiringly.

"Know him?"

"Do I know him?" murmured Horace Miller, as though he had been asked whether he would recognise the King. "Yes, I do. No one else down yet?"

"Only those by the escape."

Miller pushed his way back again. A billow of smoke came down on him, making him choke. Water was coming down the walls like a miniature Niagara, but Miller, drenched though he was when a hose was misdirected, did not budge.

Now he recognised the two outstretched men.

Kerr, Bob Kerr, and Davidson. Great heaven, they'd caught it. Craigie's best men, and—Davidson's throat was cut.

He pushed forward, and a fireman stopped him roughly.

"Say, you—"

"Miller, of the Yard," said Miller brusquely.

The fireman stared hard, recognised authority, nodded and apologised. A fresh roar, telling of another start from the burning room, was echoing in Miller's ears

as he bent over Kerr. He could see that the chief agent was still breathing, but he was feverishly anxious to know what the doctor thought.

A doctor was already looking at Davidson.

"Well?" Miller snapped, unconscious of his abruptness. The doctor felt annoyed, saw the tense expression on the dusty-looking Miller's face, and relaxed.

"Bad, I'm afraid. Not much damaged by the fire, but that—"

Miller had a sudden desire to blow his nose, and he turned sharply away, almost cannoning into the two firemen carrying another unconscious figure.

A moment later he recognised Bob Carruthers, whose fair hair was burned almost off his head, and whose coat had been charred to nothing. Kerr—Davidson—Carruthers. Craigie's three most lively agents.

Miller felt a hand clutch at his sleeve, and swung round. He almost knocked Lois Dacre off her feet.

Lois's face was as composed as always, but he hated the expression in her grey eyes. She seemed to be suffering agony, and he knew how things were between her and Bob Kerr. Miller gulped and found a smile, intending to be cheerful.

"He's all right, Miss Dacre."

"You would say that," said Lois. She looked darkly at her, her lips set very tightly.

"Well, there's not much we can do," growled Miller. "Does Craigie know?"

"Yes, I've just phoned him."

"Good girl," said Miller, slightly patronising. He had found it hard to believe that Gordon Craigie was trusting a woman to work for him—Lois Dacre was the first woman agent of Department Z—but he had to admit she always did the right thing.

"What's it all about?"

"I don't know," said Lois bitterly. "I wish to goodness I could discover someone—something. It's just standing here that does the damage, and—well!"

She broke off, glanced down at Bob Kerr, who was being looked over by the doctor, and nodded to Miller.

"Tell Craigie I've gone after the woman in the case, will you?" she said, and with a sharp, hardly humorous smile, she slipped through the crowd. Miller pushed his bowler hat back and scratched a thinning patch of hair. She was a cool 'un, a proper match for Kerr. But—

The medico, brusque, alert, plump and short-tempered, glared at him.

"Look here, sir—"

"Superintendent Miller, of the Yard," said Miller patiently, and the other stopped in the middle of a word, and patted his waistcoat.

"Oh, Sorry, Superintendent. This man"—he pointed to Kerr—"should be all right in a day or two. The others are touch and go. The ambulances should be along soon. They'll go to Marion's Hospital, of course."

Miller nodded silently, thanked him after a moment, and set out to find Webb. The fire, which had once threatened to be really dangerous, had been caught in time. Already the flames had stopped coming out of the window, and the smoke-cloud was lessening. After a struggle, Miller managed to reach the passage from which Criff's flat opened.

It took Captain Webb thirty seconds to say to him roughly:

"Petrol. Not a shred of doubt about it. My goodness, Miller, you've got something on your hands here!"

"Don't I know it!" said Miller heavily.

He looked round, made sure that the Divisional police were doing what they should, and walked slowly towards the lift.

It came up as he reached the shaft, and he saw the tall, thin, hatchet-faced man wearing a dark-grey suit and a somewhat battered trilby, who was starting to step out. Miller grunted.

"Hallo, Craigie."

"Eh? Oh, hallo, Miller. Bad business."

"Heard about the others?"

"Tell me."

Miller told what he could, and Craigie pushed his hat farther back on his head, a worried frown wrinkling his forehead.

"H'm—h'm. Well, I suppose we have to expect it. Criff was shot dead, you say?"

"Looks as though Kerr or one of the others got him."

"Does it? I can't imagine those three and Criff ending that way without help."

"Now, I didn't say—" protested Miller, and then he smiled. "It's no odds, Craigie. By the way, I've just seen Miss Dacre. She says she's after a woman."

"A woman, eh? H'm. That'll be Lady Mondell—but of course you haven't heard about it yet. Come round in"—he glanced at his watch—"three hours, will you? You might ask the Commissioner if he can spare me half an hour at the same time."

Miller promised that he would, and Craigie walked along to the scene of the fire. But Webb assured him—believing that he was an assessor, for Craigie looked the part—there was no chance of finding anything in the flat, apart from the traces of arson. Not the slightest doubt about it.

Craigie nodded soberly.

"Thanks—that's what I wanted."

He left the Captain, called a cab at the first opportunity, and sat back after ordering the driver to go to Marion's Hospital.

"Here you are, sir." The cabbie spoke such good English that Craigie looked at him twice, to find a harmless-looking but well-dressed youngster. Craigie jumped out, paid him, and went into the hospital.

He knew the house-surgeon, and met no difficulties; he did not even have to show an identity-card.

The surgeon, Sir Wilfrid Mayer, was tall, bluff, light-haired, possessed of a perfect bedside manner that was used rarely because he worked mostly on the operating-table and the diagnosis of "all-but-gone-cases," and a pair of fine blue eyes.

"Hallo, Craigie. After those fire victims, eh?"

"And in a hurry, Mayer," said Craigie.

"As usual, eh? Well I wish I could say for sure about the two big fellows. Nasty throat wounds, done with a carving knife by the look of them. The other fellow—"

shortish man, I should say—he's pulling round. Conscious ten minutes ago, and demanding to see you."

Mayer smiled slyly at his little joke. "I'll take you up."

Kerr was in a small private ward. He was heavily bandaged, and his right foot looked ten times its normal size under the bedclothes, but he was obviously desperately anxious to talk. A middle-aged and disapproving nurse sniffed when Mayer told her she could go, and then the surgeon discreetly departed.

Kerr, on his pillows, was not smiling.

"Thank heaven you've come; I thought the idiots would never fetch you. Listen, Gordon—Criff was shot through a window. That man Kryn chucked a grenade, and set fire to the place—yes, I saw him with my own eyes. Kryn's our man for the time being. I don't know how Wally

and Carry were put out, but the servant
was missing, so it looks like him."

Craigie leaned back on his chair, nodding
with his eyes half-closed.

"Very much like him, Bob. Did Criff
say?"

Kerr grimaced.

"As much as he could. He didn't know
great deal, Gordon, although he knew
enough to make the others want to kill
him. And they did."

"So there are others, eh?"

"I don't think we seriously thought
differently," said Kerr. "Criff was always
the limelight. It worried me at times,
a man really behind the scenes wouldn't
see himself as much as Criff did; but he
did to. He was told to. He held the
strings but the others collected some
of the cash."

"And who are the others?" asked Craigie.

Kerr was silent for a moment, and
nothing too quickly. He had put a
great deal into this effort, and he felt
wiser than he liked. He was cursing
his own weakness, but he managed to gather
enough strength to say slowly:

"I don't know. Criff always meets them
at Vallena. He named Prell, the Val-
lenian Foreign Secretary, as one of them,
and said he didn't know the names of the
others. When he saw them they were
ways disguised."

"Sigmund Prell, eh?" Craigie seemed to
be thinking aloud.

"That's the fellow. Well—these orders
in putting the wrong goods in English
imports. A simple explanation, Craigie.
A simple we didn't think of it."

"Humm?"

Kerr heaved himself up on one elbow.

"Very simple—and damnably cunning. By
ing it, they made English firms take their
business elsewhere. At the moment we are
losing practically nothing from Vallena,
that gives the Vallenian Government every
reason for putting a high tariff on our goods
and for breaking off economic relation-
ship. It's stabbing at our mid-European
side effectively. And that!"—Kerr managed
a smile—"is about as far as I can think
my head's aching like the devil."

Craigie stood up abruptly. It was the
first time he had ever heard Kerr breathe
a word of complaint, and it certainly spell-
ed change in capital letters. If he were not
sure he would put Kerr back for days,
he was going to need him badly.

"Sorry, old man. You've worked it out
very tightly, and I'll follow up."

Kerr nodded, but Craigie knew he had
really heard the words.

The Chief of Department Z left the hos-
pital after learning that there was no
change in the serious condition of his other
agents.

So it looked like an effort to block British
goods from reaching some of the mid-
European countries. That was something
to work on, anyhow.

Craigie reached the steps of the hos-
pital and heard the usual roar of traffic.
The usual hum of conversation and the
flowing of frenzied-voiced newspaper-
editors making a sensation out of an actress's
marriage.

Craigie bought a paper and opened it.
He frowned when he read under
the headline that the beautiful Princess
Strina of Vallena was planning a solo
trip to Africa. She was getting notori-
ous.

Then he stood quite still, letting people
pass him and some swear at him. He
suddenly noticed them: he saw only the

stop-press message that seemed to make
him shiver, inwardly and outwardly, for it
ran:

Sigmund Prell Vallenian Foreign Sec-
retary reported assassinated by identified
Russian agent—A. I. News Exchange.
Prell. Prell. The one man Criff had
been able to identify.

It was one of the rare occasions when
Gordon Craigie felt in a hurry. He jumped
round, in turn banging into a passer-by
and incurring a not unspoken wrath, and
called as well as waved a taxi. The
driver swerved into the sidewalk. Craigie
snapped: "Scotland Yard"—which was
more likely to inspire speed in the cabbie
than "Foreign Office," and jumped in.

So Prell had been murdered.

Craigie knew that it was another step,
and a longer one than the others, in this
strange affair of the Vallenian trade
comedy. It suggested that things were
moving to a head, for no one would
arrange the assassination of a prominent
diplomat unless there was an urgent reason
for it.

He wished he could feel that there
was the slightest reason for believing that
the men in the affair had finished in Eng-
land. He could not. Whereas before
they had known something of Criff and
had slowly discovered others, now they
were absolutely in the dark, unless one
of the men apprehended at Grattle Street
could give information.

The cab jerked to avoid another coming
behind it, and Craigie glanced into the
interior of this other city. He saw a shortish
pug-faced man, who was glaring ahead
of him as though he was in the dickens
of a hurry, and his cabbie could not move.

The man glanced once into Craigie's cab
and away again.

Craigie's driver, annoyed at being passed
so easily, swung out, narrowly missed a
private car, and made Craigie forget all
about the pug-faced man who would have
been recognised very promptly by Captain
Webb or Superintendent Miller.

"Scotland Yard, sir." The cabbie pushed
back the sliding glass partition.

"Make it the Foreign Office," Craigie
said.

"Right you are, sir."

Craigie was deposited outside the
Foreign Office. A few yards ahead of him
a taxi slowed down, just long enough
for the pug-faced man, belated by some
to be a newspaper reporter, to look out
of the rear window of the cab.

As he did so, Pug Face fingered an auto-
matic in his pocket.

There was Craigie, the main-spring of
British Intelligence, walking sharply along
the pavement towards a small door leading
to the Foreign Office.

Pug Face glanced at the traffic about him.
His driver was a good man and would get
away if anyone could. But there was an
infernal risk of being caught.

Had it been Tim Platt or Fencer, Craigie
would have been dead in that moment. As
it was Pug Face hesitated until Craigie's
right foot disappeared into the doorway.
Then the man raised his gun—and Craigie
disappeared altogether.

"Too late!" muttered Pug Face to himself.

He felt relieved, not because he had
avoided killing a man, but because he had
avoided the possibility of being caught and
afterwards hung for it. He effaced from his
memory the fact that he had dallied, and
tapped on the glass partition.

"Strand Hotel, driver."

"Right, sir." Driver and Pug Face had
worked together in their mysterious way for
a long time, but in all things they appeared
to be strangers.

Meanwhile the Foreign Secretary cowered
at the interruption—he was dictating some-
what hastily—saw Craigie and poded to his
secretary, who discreetly and silently gath-
ered his tools of office and vanished.

There had recently been changes in the
Cabinet, and the late Foreign Secretary, one
Campbell, had been pushed to a less onerous
job, while a younger though still middle-
aged man had replaced him. Mr. Miles
Bettin possessed courage, a good appearance,
a vitriolic tongue that would sooner or later
get him into trouble with the back-benchers,
and—to Craigie the most unlikely attribute
of a Foreign Secretary—he knew what he
wanted and always tried to get it.

"Hallo, Craigie; I've been expecting you."

Bettin smiled. "Or perhaps I should say
I expected you to send for me. Comes to
a pretty pass when you only have to press
a bell and there we are!"

Craigie nodded and smiled fleetingly. It
had long since been arranged that the
"mountains" should move to Craigie. A
matter of considerable protest on the part
of some Cabinet Ministers, but Craigie in-
variably argued that he had to be in his
office, in case urgent reports came in.
Craigie usually won.

"I've been out. What's this about Prell?"

"I've just been dictating orders for the
Baj embassy," said Bettin. "A bad busi-
ness." He unbuttoned his coat and fidgeted
with a small flower in his buttonhole. "Killed
by an Ogpu agent, they say. No real proof
yet, and of course Moscow denies it. Any-
how, Prell is dead enough. Shot as he
walked from his home to the office."

"What's the murderer's name?" asked
Craigie.

"Vonyvitch, Stefan Vonyvitch, who—"

"Oh—ho! An Ogpu agent right enough,
or he was up to three months ago. One of
their stars. Just scraped out of the big
Berlin trial, remember? But it doesn't fit
in."

Bettin pushed cigarettes across his desk.

"I thought you'd have something to say.
What doesn't fit in?"

"I won't smoke, thanks. The way things
are going, Bettin. They're not running too
well. You had my report this morning about
Criff and the Vallenian business?"

"The Dorennet murder? Yes."

"Well, Criff's dead. He talked a little,
and then was shot by someone working—at
one time—with him. It makes things awk-
ward. But what makes it more interesting
from our point of view is that Criff impli-
cated Prell before he died."

"Implicated Prell?"

"What time was he shot?" asked Craigie.

"Greenwich time, about twelve forty-five."

Craigie stood up suddenly, thrust his
hands in his pockets, and turned towards the
door.

"As late as that, eh?" He reached the
door and marched back again, and Bettin
knew he would keep moving now until the
talk was over. "Twelve forty-five. I had
word about the fire at Devanet Court at—
when was it?—near enough twelve o'clock.
Say Criff was shot after he had talked, at
about eleven forty-five. So they could have
discovered that he'd given Prell away, called
Baj and arranged for Prell to be killed, be-
cause he was the obvious man we should go
after." Craigie was looking paler than
usual as he talked. "I don't like this, Bet-
tin. It makes the whole show more thorough,
and a lot more complicated."

"Does it?" asked Bettin mildly. "Sup-
posing you talked a bit about it?"

Craigie nodded, and gave the Foreign Secretary a resume of the affairs to date. The Foreign Secretary took it quietly, but it was difficult to say which of the two men seemed more worried when Craigie finally left the office.

It was a quarter to three, and Craigie sent a messenger for sandwiches and made himself some coffee before he sat back and tried to work the thing out.

Three of his five telephones were humming when he entered the office after his snack, and he took each receiver off, telling the men at the other ends to hold on. Then he started to take the reports, a pencil in his hand and a notebook in front of him.

Agent 39 reported that he and Agent 25 had lost Kryn. The man had left the Ritz Hotel, and dodged them at Piccadilly. Before that he had been visited by a short man, youngish-looking, apparently named Brown, and possessed of a pug face.

"Ever seen him before?" asked Craigie.

"No—a new one on me."

"All right," said Craigie. "I'll phone you a bit later."

Agent 6, or Dodo Trale, that immaculate, handsome and laconic young man who was the oldest agent on Craigie's books in years of service, came next. Trale had been visiting Grattle Street, Hurrow.

"None of them know much, Gordon. We got all the information we can from them. One fellow—a man named Jensen—admitted knowing that Criff was the man who phoned them about Failing, but that's no improvement on what we had before. How're things?"

Craigie explained, shortly. Trale was silent at the other end of the line for a moment. Then:

"It's bad. Want me?"

"You'd better come up."

"Time for me to call at the hospital first?"

"Yes, get here about four," said Craigie.

He knew that Davidson and Trale were old friends, really close friends, and he could imagine what Trale would feel like if the affair ended fatally for Wally Davidson.

He picked up the third instrument, hoping it would be word from Lois Dacre. His pencil was poised, but a man's voice came over the wire; moreover, an unfamiliar tone.

Craigie's body grew taut.

The man at the other end of the line had a deep voice which was tinged with mockery. Craigie knew in a flash what this was going to be about.

"Well, Craigie. Isn't it time you drew your men off?"

Craigie's answer came quickly, as he reached for one of the other telephones.

"What for? They're doing well."

"I'm glad you think so," said the man at the other end of the wire. "Davidson, Carruthers and Failing, all dead or as good as dead. Kerr was lucky, but he won't last much longer, and you— But it would be much simpler if you withdrew. After all, it doesn't affect you personally, Craigie."

Craigie laughed, although he was not feeling like laughter. His right finger was tapping on the telephone by his right hand. Long-short-long-short—he was giving instructions to the man at the other end of the line. It went direct to a secretary who had previously had to take Morse messages in similar emergencies. The secretary gathered the drift and immediately telephoned the Yard, giving orders for the

line connected with Whitehall 12121-8 to be traced immediately.

Craigie stopped tapping at last.

"I'm afraid we're getting melodramatic, aren't we?"

"I doubt if Failing thought that," snapped the other.

Craigie's eyes were very narrow.

"No-o, Failing is perhaps the worst angle of this affair that we've touched. But calling me like this is just nonsensical vanity. As bad as Criff's."

"You think so? You'd be wiser to call it a serious warning," said the man with the resonant voice. "Understand that we're not going to brook interference. We'll act as we have already started, and there won't be a member of your precious Department left unless you withdraw them."

Craigie was smiling to himself.

"You think so? Let me see—I've fifty-odd agents in England, and several hundred abroad. This is going to be serious, I can see. But just a moment. Why kill Sigmund Prell?"

He knew that he had managed to get a thrust past his speaker, for a smothered oath came, and the voice grew rasping and harsher. But it was an English voice.

"We killed Prell because he was likely to get in our way. And we'll do the same to others who have the same tricks, Craigie. I've given you a chance—"

Craigie's laugh sounded genuinely amused.

"I'm not used to them, I assure you. We usually get taken more seriously. By the way, you know Criff talked quite a lot before he was unfortunate enough to be shot?"

Again there was a pause, and this time the man at the other end sounded more cautious, as though he were deliberately holding back his temper.

"So—he did?"

"About Prell and other things," said Craigie. "A great number of other things. Can I make a counter offer?"

"What's that?"

"If you'll come and see me, and talk to me, I'll make it worth your while," said Craigie. "I'll guarantee no police action, for instance, against you."

For some reason or other the suggestion seemed to incense his caller. Craigie heard a lurid stream of oaths before the receiver was banged down. The line had hardly gone dead before another rang and Craigie lifted it quickly.

"Miller here, Craigie, that caller—"

"He's just finished? Where was it from?"

"From a call-box, Craigie. From the nearest call-box to Lane House, Camberley. How does that sound?"

"Camberley!" exclaimed Gordon Craigie, and his mind was immediately chasing round on this new—or fresh—angle. The house of Mr. Matthew Horn, his brother-in-law Joshua, and his nephew Freddie, the house where Doriennet had been murdered was back in the centre of the stage again.

In common with the other members of the Department Lois Dacre had known that Lady Mondell played a part in this affair. She had known also that her ladyship was suspected of minor espionage, and that Z agents were watching her. Lois knew, for instance, that young Failing had been detailed to win millady's confidence.

Just prior to seeing Miller outside Devnnet Court, Lois had phoned Craigie, telling him something of what had happened. Her appearance there had been

solely because she had learned, earlier in the morning, that Kerr was going to see Criff. Craigie had told her of Failing's death, and with an intuition which helped her where it might have failed a man, Lois had guessed at the real state of affairs between Failing and the ex-actress.

When she had seen Lady Mondell at Devnnet Court she had not hesitated to follow her.

She had no definite job that morning, but had been waiting for instructions, something she could do off her own bat was equally satisfactory.

For two hours after leaving Miller she had followed Lady Mondell, and she grew more and more puzzled as the minutes flew.

The other woman seemed to be wandering aimlessly about London, telephoning two or three times from call-boxes. She visited a milliner's and spent half an hour trying on Paris fashions; went into shops apparently with no real objective, for she walked through three or four floors, and then out again; and all the time Lois had a feeling that she was following a woman who was half-insane.

But why?

There was something in the strained expression of the woman's face that told Lois Dacre that her motive was not caution or cunning. Lady Mondell was wandering aimlessly because she felt aimless, because something was worrying, scaring or frightening her.

At three o'clock, to Lois Dacre's relief, Rene took a cab, and ten minutes afterwards she alighted outside the main entrance of Devnnet Court.

The ground floor of the building where Rene Mondell had her flat had not been affected by the morning's fire. Lois saw her walk towards a passage; she hesitated and then stepped towards one of several telephone kiosks built inside the hall of the Court.

Lois found Craigie's lines engaged, and left a message with Sir William Fellowes at the Yard to the effect that she was at Lady Mondell's flat. There was just a possibility that the morning's tramp had been a trick, and Lois had not the slightest desire to make a dangerous mistake. Then she hurried after her quarry, and rang the bell some ten minutes after Rene had arrived.

Rene herself opened the door.

"I think you had better see me," said Lois promptly.

She had not realised before the extent of the intense misery of the other woman's expression. Few people would have called Rene beautiful just then. Her eyes were shadowed and her lips tightly drawn; she looked ten years more than her age.

"Why?" Even her voice was spiritless.

"Well—it's difficult to say," said Lois. "If you will spare me perhaps ten minutes—"

"No, please! There's nothing at all I want to buy, and—my maid has left me suddenly. I—" The woman seemed hysterical.

Lois stepped inside and closed the door behind her.

"Look here," began Lady Mondell; but Lois Dacre gripped her firmly by the arm and urged her through the small hall to the sitting-room. Rene went as though she had not the strength to resist, either mentally or physically.

She sat down heavily. Lois drew a chair up, and was astonished at the relief to her legs. Then she forgot it, and tried a broadside attack, the approach she had learned

from Bob Kerr. She wondered incidentally how Bob was.

"I've been following you about, Lady Mondell, since you were at the fire this morning. Does that mean anything?"

The words seemed to pierce the coma from which the other woman was suffering, and Rene Mondell leaned forward sharply.

"You've been following me? But why—?"

"Because you were known to be working with Criff," said Lois. "I'm working for someone else who is interested."

"You are? But Craigie doesn't use women—"

"Who said it was Craigie?" asked Lois gently, but no longer doubtful about this woman's importance; she knew Craigie, and that was conclusive.

Lady Mondell smoothed her skirts.

"I—see. I didn't know anyone else was working."

Lois smiled.

"England isn't the only country interested in Adam Criff, after all. But before we go into that—"

"I don't know what you want," said Rene with a sudden fierce intensity, "but if you're after Criff, he's dead. Thank heaven! He's made my life a misery and—"

Lois sat back, nodded and waited. She had judged correctly. The woman in front of her was desperately anxious to talk, to rid her mind of a burden; and Lois was a goddess to her.

The story was vague, but it included talks of work abroad for Criff; of the Paris affair, which seemed to have frightened the life out of Rene. Of the fact that she had started to feel for a man, whom she didn't name, and that she had learned that Criff had planned to send her to Paris that morning while the unnamed man was being killed.

"How did you learn that?" asked Lois gently.

"It was Shirin. You don't know him, but he phoned me. I—I think Shirin dialled Criff, and Criff was annoyed with him last night. Criff was planning some kind of trick with—Jim. I came back from the airport at once, and the fire had started. Jim's not at home. I've phoned him time and time again, and he's not there! Criff—Criff's dead. But have the others seen—seen to Jim?"

Lois Dacre stood up slowly, putting her hand on the other woman's shoulder.

"I'm sorry, Lady Mondell. I can give you some information, but it isn't pleasant."

Those dulled hazel eyes widened. A hand clutched tightly at Lois' wrist.

"Jim's not—"

"I'm sorry," Lois said.

She hated giving the other woman the news, but someone had to, and perhaps she could do it less brutally than others. Moreover, there was a chance that Rene Mondell would be useful to the Department, and Craigie needed everything and everyone who might help him.

Rene sat very still. Her expression of acute misery eased. She seemed to come out of the coma, despite the fact that she was so motionless; and then she burst out:

"If Criff wasn't dead I'd—I'd kill him! The—murderer! He must have learned that Jim and I were—"

"He did," Lois said.

She made up her mind then that she could safely say that she was working for Craigie. She believed that Rene Mondell was interested in nothing apart from the death of Felling, and the fact that Criff,

and those for whom Criff had worked, had killed him.

"Listen, Lady Mondell. I am working for Craigie. I know just what happened. Mr. Felling was told, this morning, to come here and see you. You were supposed to be hurt. He suspected a trick, and told—Bob Kerr. You know Kerr?"

"Yes." Those eyes were almost feverish.

"Well, Felling was kidnapped when he called here. Kerr and two others followed him, but Criff discovered that, and Felling was killed. The man who shot him was killed, too—Kerr got him."

Rene's eyes were incredibly hard.

"The man may have shot him. Criff and—others really killed him."

"You're sure?"

"Yes." Her voice was as hard as her expression.

"If you had an opportunity of working against them, would you take it?"

Rene Mondell pushed her chair abruptly back and stood up. Her eyes were much brighter, and her hands were clenched, but her voice was very steady.

"I'd do anything. Anything, to—to avenge Jim."

"I see," said Lois Dacre quietly. "Then will you please say nothing, to anyone, of my visit? Just wait until you hear from me? You've been working for Criff against Craigie. There may be a chance of working for Craigie against those who were behind Criff. I can't promise, but—"

The other woman nodded.

"I think I understand," she said. "I'll be quiet. But it must happen quickly; I can't sit back doing nothing. I—"

She broke off. There was a sharp ring at the front door bell, and both of them stared towards the hall. Rene drew a sharp breath, and then relaxed.

"I wonder who—"

"May I slip into the bedroom?" asked Lois quickly. "I'll have the door open, and if it's anyone unpleasant I'll be at hand. It will be as well if I'm not seen, if we can avoid it."

Lady Mondell nodded. "All right. Quickly." She seemed to be much stronger now that there was talk of working for Craigie, and Lois felt satisfied. Craigie would at last give the other woman something to do, even if it were unimportant.

Lois left the bedroom door open two inches. She waited by the opening long enough to glimpse the tall, stout man who entered the room. It was no one she had seen before, and she felt a little disappointed. She heard his voice, deep, cultured, persuasive.

"I promise you, Lady Mondell, I shall not waste your time," he was saying as Rene closed the front door. Without being invited the big man sat in an easy chair. He looked about him, as though commenting mentally on the luxury of the apartment.

"What is it you want, please?"

The visitor turned a pair of smallish eyes towards Rene Mondell. He had a bluish fowl, as though he needed a shave, and his fat fingers were folded across his sizeable paunch.

"I have come, Lady Mondell, with an important message. Is your maid in?"

"She's not," Rene said shortly, and the other's smallish eyes turned towards the door.

"You are all alone?"

"I don't know that I like your questions," said Rene sharply, and Lois secretly applauded her attitude. "What is it you want? I can of course telephone for assistance if I need it."

"My dear lady!" The big man laughed immoderately. "My visit is strictly proper, I promise you. Strictly proper! You know, of course, of the sad death of Mr. Criff?"

Rene's voice was expressionless.

"I do."

"And you worked for him, just as I did," said the big man. "Believe me, he was a foolish fellow. He was much too big for his boots, much too big. It was decided some days ago that he would have to die, and I was warned, although I believe other members of our little fraternity were left in ignorance. But now there is still work to do."

It seemed incredible to Lois that Rene Mondell could remain so unmoved. She would not have done so but for her first caller; that was reasonably certain. Now she was playing a part, a part suggested by Lois; and she was playing it well.

"I see. Who sent you, Mr.—"

"My name is Smith, my dear lady," Smith's wide grin told Rene that he was lying, and Lois guessed it. "My principals—and your principals, suggested the call. Your beauty, my dear Lady Mondell, and your ability, will make you invaluable. I am requested to offer you two thousand pounds a year, as a retaining fee, and one hundred pounds for each week you are actively working for the fraternity, if you will continue with us. You can be assured that your work will be under much more astute direction than it was with Adam Criff."

There was a moment's silence, and Lois wondered whether the man would see that Rene was acting; and she wondered also whether the older woman would crack under this strain.

Rene did not, for her voice was steady enough if a little more tense.

"I don't know. I'm not interested in money, Mr. Smith, and I'm tired of the whole business. Tired to death of it!"

Mr. Smith raised his brows, and shifted his hands from his paunch to the arms of his chair.

"I see, I see. A pity, Lady Mondell. But I feel that you will be well advised to accept a most generous offer. Adam Criff remembered to report a little affair in Paris, only a year or so ago. Most sad—and most unfortunate if your part—"

There was venom in Rene Mondell's voice, but her acting now was really superb. The shock of learning that Felling had died seemed to have given her a sharper intelligence, the birth of which had taken place when Criff had talked as he had on the previous night.

"I see. Blackmail, is it? Well—supposing I refuse? I didn't kill that man in Paris—"

Mr. Smith turned his methods.

"I do not doubt it, my dear Lady Mondell. But you will admit that circumstances seemed to be against you. But please, please do not think of blackmail. After all, our offer is very generous indeed."

Rene walked to the side of the room, took a cigarette from a box and lit it thoughtfully. All the time her eyes were on Smith's.

"I see. I'll think it over, Mr. Smith."

"I would much rather have your decision now, please."

"You can't." She was decisive. "I can't make up my mind immediately, please understand that. Say some time to-morrow morning, if you will call again."

"Very good, very good." Mr. Smith seemed reasonably satisfied, and heaved himself from his chair. "I shall call, say, at ten o'clock?"

"I probably won't be up until eleven."

Mr. Smith chuckled; he was an oily individual.

"Oh, luxury! Then half-past eleven, Lady Mondell. Be sure, please, to have your answer, and be earnestly advised by me to accept the suggestions. Good afternoon."

Rene showed him to the door. He bowed ponderously as he left the flat, and Lois could hear his footsteps as he walked along the passage. Lois was smiling her congratulations at Rene Mondell as the latter, after locking the front door, hurried to the bedroom. She seemed breathless, a little excited.

"Was that—that all right?"

"Perfect," Lois assured her. "Now wait just a moment."

Taking the other's arm, she stepped to the window, keeping behind the curtains so that they could see yet not be seen.

On the opposite side of the road was a car, with a youngish-looking man at the wheel. A few seconds later the flabby Mr. Smith appeared and climbed into a two-seater of ancient vintage. Both cars moved off in quick succession, and no matter how suspicious Mr. Smith might be of the driver of the saloon, he would have to admit that the other car started slightly ahead of him—not a thing a watcher would be likely to do.

Rene Mondell was frowning.

"What does that mean?"

"It means that Smith will be followed," said Lois. "He might discover it, but on the other hand 'Trale will probably follow as far as he goes, and that would be useful. Well—do you see now how you might be able to help?"

The other nodded slowly. The weariness of her expression had gone. She looked stronger than she had before; she was stronger.

"You mean I can work for them, Criff's people, and for you?"

"Do you think you can?"

Rene Mondell laughed. It was not a humorous sound and it was not pleasant; her eyes seemed to be looking past Lois. She was seeing the light-haired, smiling and cheerful youngster who had made her fall in love, and she was picturing, too, what he looked like dead.

"I'm sure I can. They killed Jim—"

And then, with the contrariness of women, the storm came. Lois knew she could do nothing to stop or ease it. Rene Mondell simply collapsed into a chair and cried, as Lois had never seen a woman cry before. It was heart-rending.

Lois, with her practical mind, slipped into the kitchenette and made coffee. When she returned the paroxysm was over, and Rene Mondell, bright-eyed and steady-lipped, was apologetic awkwardly.

"I'm sorry, but—"

"Don't be sorry," said Lois; and then she added: "You know how desperately hard Criff tried to get Bob Kerr?"

"Ye-es?" Rene looked puzzled.

"Kerr and I are engaged," Lois said, and the words seemed to forge a bond of friendship that both of them realised yet neither could have put into words.

While Dodo Trale was following the flabby Mr. Smith, while Lois and Rene were drinking coffee and smoking, while a pug-faced man was talking on the telephone to Mr. Kryn, and while three agents of Craigie's were on their way to Camberley in the hope of finding a man with a deep, resonant voice, Craigie, Sir William Fellowes and Superintendent Miller were gathered in Craigie's office. They had rehearsed the affair at

some length, and there seemed nothing more they could discuss when the telephone, which had interrupted them half a dozen times, rang again.

Craigie left his armchair and lifted the receiver. Miles Bettin's voice came over the wires, sharp and precise as always.

"Craigie?"

"Yes, carry on, Bettin."

"There's more news from Vallena," said Bettin sharply. "They've done two things. Openly accused the Soviet of arranging Prell's murder—"

"We expected that."

"It's going to make things stickier in mid-Europe," complained Bettin. "But that's not all, and the other things affects us more directly. They've doubled the tariff on all British goods, and fixed a minimum of fifty per cent. The thin edge of the wedge, eh?"

Craigie's lips pursed.

"Ye-es, and not so thin perhaps. But what's the connection between Prell's assassination and the tariff? That's our problem."

"You'd better send the best man you've got over there," said Bettin. "I—"

Bettin stopped, with an exclamation. He shouted "Craigie!" and then there came, very clearly to Craigie's ears, the sharp crack of a pistol shot. The telephone at the end clattered downwards with a rattling din, and then Craigie heard a whispered message:

"They've got me. A very tall—thin—"

man, Craigie—Matthew Horn . . ."

And then the Foreign Secretary's voice stopped.

The murder of Miles Bettin was one of those tragedies that it was impossible to hush up. But here were some things that could be done, and an urgent meeting of the Cabinet—or such members who were available in London—was called within half an hour of the shooting.

Apparently no one in the Foreign Office had noticed anything amiss. Fellowes and Miller were not unknown in Bettin's office, and with the help of one or two discreet under-secretaries, people were kept out, and the leakage of information would not reach the Press prior to the meeting, unless the tall, lean man named Kryn had told the papers.

The Rt. Hon. David Wishart, the then Premier, distinguished, a little inclined to dally, but popular and honest, always showed his best in an emergency. And as often happens he had arranged for Craigie to be present at 10 Downing Street.

Wishart told the others the trouble, and had to wait five minutes before the sensation died down.

Craigie gave a first-hand recital of what he had heard, and waited for the outburst of questions. Did he know who? Did he know why? Was it connected with the Chino-Japanese policy? The Italian, German, Russian policy? Was it—?

"And what are you doing, Craigie?" Wishart asked quickly, when the first barrage of questions and answers was over.

"As much as I can. Bettin mentioned a man who had already been connected with this business, but I can't tell you a great deal about him yet. A Matthew Horn, head of an export firm, and living near Camberley."

He had half-hoped that one of the others present would be able to say a word about Horn, but the name obviously meant nothing to them. Wishart played with his glasses, thick and yet light-framed.

"Well, it isn't a thing we can handle secretly. And the connection with Prell

will be assumed, if nothing worse. I'm afraid we shall have some trouble."

"We could say that the murderer is known, Wishart. It's true, up to a point—I know the man but can't put my fingers on him."

"How will that help?" asked Jonathan Scott practically.

"We'll be able to say it was for private reasons," said Craigie. "A personal quarrel. If we give that story out to the Press as semi-official, they will make a great deal more of it than the other aspect of the somewhat nebulous connection with Prell. It won't cause half as much alarm, and it will give us time to work."

As he had expected, there was considerable argument, but Wishart, Scott, Lane, and Harris were all with him, and the decision to do as he said was carried by a fifty per cent. majority. Craigie waited just long enough to make sure of it, and then left the Cabinet to its task.

Freddie Kingham had been a gloomy soul since Doriennet's death.

It had been a nasty shock when he had seen the body of Doriennet, but he had derived some satisfaction from being able to send that secret message to Miss Dale—as he knew Lois Dacre. Her thanks had been warm enough on the telephone and Freddie had hoped to see her again. Alone.

Instead a tough-looking cove named Kerr had arrived, with others. They had brought Lois Dale. It was true, but she had seemed hardly to notice him. Moreover, they had brought a man who had been wounded in both legs, and commandeered his, Freddie's, bedroom while the doctor did his job.

The inquest was for Tuesday. Pretty decent of Uncle Matt after all to give him two days off. No "stick-your-nose-to-the-grindstone" fuss about Uncle Matt. A great fellow.

The only member of the household who seemed unaffected by the murder in their midst had been the cook, a cheerful, garrulous but hard-hearted soul, whose name—of course, thought Freddie when he had first heard it—was Martha.

Martha excelled herself on the Tuesday. Freddie ate his best meal since Saturday's lunch, and grew more cheerful. He took the car out of the garage with little or no qualm, had a fast little spin, and came back to find three cars parked outside Lane House, and a remarkable number of lean and tough-looking men in and around the grounds.

Browning, dressed in the same dilapidated grey suit, looked mulishly at his young employer as Freddie entered the garage.

"What's all the crowd about, Browning?"

The shell-shocked handyman muttered something that he obviously believed Freddie was too young to hear, and then:

"Can't move a n'inch wivout 'em, Master Fred. Bloomin' nuisance they are—bloomin' busies. What I wanten know is, why don't they look fer the feller that did it, instead 've comin' here?"

"Ask me," said Freddie.

He parked the car and moved off humming cheerfully under his breath and looking for anything which might suggest that Miss Dale was here. No luck. Nor, for that matter, did he recognise the man Kerr or his companions. A fresh bunch had come down.

Uncle Matt would probably be sore about it.

Freddie went up to his room, humming and occasionally bursting into an "umpty-ump-ump." After all, he had not known the dead man at all, and it was hard to be sorry about a fellow you only knew on the letter-heading of his business paper. That Vallenian tariff just about finished trade there.

"Mr. Kingham, sir."

It was Bennet, a Bennet who seemed to speak nervously, as if he was scared out of his life. "Your—your uncle, sir. I think the—the police are going to—to take him, sir."

Freddie stood still, staring aghast at the butler. His stupefaction seemed to split his mind asunder. Uncle Matt going with the police?

"He's—what?"

"The—the police, sir—"

"Oh, but look here, he's one of the best," said Freddie loudly. "It's all nonsense. I'd better go and see them—"

He had no idea what he would say if he did see them, but had a desperate urge to do and say something. Hang it, even the police had sense, and to arrest a man like Uncle Matthew was crazy!

"Sir!" Bennet's voice was pitiable, the man was a wreck.

"All right, Bennet, I won't do anything rash."

"It isn't that, sir. It's—Mr. Matthew asked me to—to give you these papers, sir. Whatever happens you are to keep them, sir. There—there's a letter from him as well."

Bennet, speaking in a whisper that only just reached the younger man's ears, was holding out two envelopes, a foolscap and a plain commercial one. Freddie turned irresolutely from the door.

"When did he give you these?"

"He—he told me you were to have them if the police came, sir. You were to hide them. The letter—"

Bennet was obviously incapable of coherent thought. Poor blighter, he had worked for Matthew for fifteen years. Freddie reminded himself. He scowled as he took the papers, and Bennet turned away.

"I—I should read the letter first, sir."

Freddie hesitated, and then ripped open the smaller envelope. The other was heavily sealed, and the only writing on it was in the top left-hand corner, where three letters had been written, with three figures following:

UMY—854.

"Odd," decided Freddie.

He did not see the odd gleam in Bennet's eyes as the butler slipped out of the room. He turned the paper from the small envelope over twice, and scowled. For there was no real letter. Only a few words were written on the paper, and Uncle Matt's easily recognisable initials—he wrote a very tall, backwards hand—were scrawled beneath.

"Keep these until called for by someone quoting UMY—854. Ask no questions.—M.H."

"Well—I'm—hanged!" decided Freddie.

He stared down at the sealed envelope, and then wondered what would happen if the police found it in his possession.

That loyalty which Lois Dacre had read in Freddie Kingham's face showed itself again. Dash it, he was half assuming that Uncle Matt did know something about Doriennet's murder, and that was silly. Yet obviously Matthew did not want to let the police find it in his possession.

Freddie considered a hiding-place.

He dismissed several possibilities as too obvious. It was surprisingly difficult to find a place where you could hide an envelope of any size. And he could not put it anywhere in the grounds, because of that crowd of police, or whoever they were.

"Hang it!" snapped Freddie aloud. "I'll keep it in my pocket; they probably won't search me. I'll make 'em get a warrant before they do, anyhow."

Annoyed, pugnacious, a little scared and vastly intrigued, Kingham tucked both envelopes in his pocket and hurried out of the room. He saw two plainclothes men, actually Department 2 agents, in the hall. They seemed to be guarding the drawing-room door. Freddie walked boldly towards them.

"Sorry, son. The room is engaged for a few minutes."

The speaker was a tall, cumbersome-looking man named Loftus.

Freddie frowned. The "son" went right under his skin: Loftus lacked the finesse which would have made Kerr or Davidson make a friend in the same circumstances.

"It's my house," Freddie said mildly.

"Well—Mr. Horn's, shall we say?"

That was the last straw. Freddie glared at the man, pushed past him, and had the handle of the door turning before Loftus could stop him. Loftus grabbed the youngster's arm, and Freddie, who had one big art—that of self-defence—sent a surprisingly fast short-arm jab towards Loftus' middle.

But Loftus was not there to take it.

He dodged and, being large, simply lifted Freddie off his feet. Kingham struggled and swore, but as he struggled the envelope with the lettering "UMY—854," face upwards, dropped lazily to the floor.

Five hours' sleep, a moderately satisfying meal, treatment on minor burns and cold compresses on an ankle that after X-ray proved to be only twisted and not broken, did a great deal to make Bob Kerr feel capable of working.

He insisted, with wearying frequency, on asking for his clothes so that he could get up, until the doctor, rather desperately, gave in.

The nurse helped him dress, and he hobbled out of his ward with the aid of a crutch. He felt very silly, but he supposed it was wise to use the thing. He spent five minutes in Wally Davidson's ward, thankful to find Davidson able to speak and smile, then he hobbled out. A porter fetched him a taxi, and at eight o'clock when darkness had just settled over London, Kerr reached Craigie's office.

"And so it looks bad for Matthew Horn," said Gordon Craigie some half an hour afterwards. "I don't think there's any doubt that he had the papers, and they prove his complicity with Criff up to the hilt."

"H'm," said Kerr. "Horn says he didn't give them to the butler, doesn't he?"

"Yes. But Bennet seems genuine. He's worked for Horn for fifteen years. Young Kingham admits that the initials are in his uncle's writing, and he's obviously dying to say they're not. And then Bettin mentioned Horn—"

"I suppose Bettin had learned something and was hoking out on you," grunted Kerr. "Where's Horn now?"

"We brought him up to Cannon Street."

"Did he know of Bettin's murder beforehand?"

"Well—he said not. But he came precious near to giving himself away. I taxed him with it, and—well, it was just an impression. I think he either knew or expected it."

"And yet he won't say a word?"

"He says plenty. Chiefly that he did not give the papers to Bennet, that he does not know what 'UMY—854' means, that he has never had any business with Adam Criff, private or otherwise."

"And 'UMY—854' is the number that Stefan Vonovitch, who murdered Prell, is registered with at the Soviet Secret Service. The papers comprise a list of Criff's activities in organising the gang at Grattle Street, an outline of the arrangements to kill Doriennet, your humble servant, and others. All past events, Gordon. If I'd been Horn I'd have burned the things."

"There were suggestions for further work," said Craigie, "but they don't mean much. They foreshadow the blockade against English goods, too. But there's no apparent reason why Horn should have kept them and sent them with the message to young Kingham."

Kerr shook his head.

"I don't like it, Gordon; it looks like a frame-up. Supposing someone else gave them to Bennet, with the instructions to pass them on as he did? It saves the other fellow, and it covers everything, by putting Horn on the spot. Who else have we got to consider down there now?"

"Young Kingham and his father."

"An ineffective but pleasant youngster and a no-good artist, both dependent on Matthew Horn for a livelihood. Then there's Bennet, and the other servants, while I met a queer customer named Browning the other day. Did you see him?"

"Queer's the word," said Craigie. "But harmless. Shell-shock."

"People have called me harmless," smiled Kerr. "Well, it's not so good. The Press have Bettin's murder—I had a shock when I saw that!—as a private feud. A good idea, and I'll bet it wasn't Wishart's."

"It wasn't," said Craigie, but he omitted to say who had been responsible for the statement. "Now, Bob, it's reasonable to assume that Bettin had been in touch with Matthew Horn, or had reason to believe Horn was in the affair. And to stop him from talking he was killed. Prell was killed in Baj in exactly the same way and for the same reason. Now, Bettin either had the wrong end of the stick or Horn does know something."

"I'd like to see him," said Kerr. "Can we have him here? By the way, have you heard from Lois lately?"

* Craigie telephoned for Matthew Horn to be brought over—Superintendent Miller was still on duty and would look after the job in person—and then answered the second question.

"Lois is doing very well, Bob. She followed Rene Mondell and she's talked with the woman. Mondell was working for Criff, and she fell in love with young Palling. Just as he did with her. Now that he's dead Mondell is prepared to do anything to avenge him. Her own words. We shall probably find her very useful, as she's been asked to carry on with the other side."

Kerr's eyes gleamed.

"And is she?"

"She says she will if we want her to. I think she'd better. I daren't give her too much information, of course, in case she talks under pressure, but when you get over

to Baj it will be useful to have her there." Kerr grinned at that.

"At this rate I'll be in Baj in a month's time, when the shindy's over. Joking apart, it will be three days before I can stand on both feet decently."

Craigie shrugged his shoulders. "It can't be helped. I want you to go, and I've a feeling that things will quieten down for a bit."

The little green light in the mantelpiece showed, and a few seconds later Miller came in with Matthew Horn.

Horn looked tired about the eyes, and he had not shaved that day. But, despite a harassing time, bordering on third degree he claimed, Horn still spoke with that surprisingly cultured voice, and he steadfastly denied having given Bennet the papers. On the other hand he said that Bennet had given him fifteen years of first-class service.

Kerr asked a few questions, some trivial and some important, but could not shake the story. Horn was taken away, not too indignant, but apparently convinced that he was the victim of a frame-up.

"And I wouldn't be surprised if he's telling the truth," said Kerr.

Craigie shrugged. "Horn must know something or Bettin would not have mentioned him."

"Unless," said Kerr, "Bettin had wrong information. Oh, well, I'll get back. If I nurse the ankle for a day, and start for Baj, say, Wednesday morning, it should be usable by the time I get there."

Craigie nodded, and half smiled. "Think Lola would like a trip?"

"I took it for granted," smiled Robert McMillan Kerr.

About the time that Kerr left Craigie's office, a monoplane dropped down on to a private airfield on the outskirts of Baj. The mechanics rushed up with the chocks, the searchlights for landing forced the four passengers to hide their eyes against the glare—and thus, perhaps by accident, to avoid being seen full face.

One of them, a very tall man, would have been recognised by anyone in Craigie's Department, or by the police. Mr. Kerr was home again.

With Kryn was a young, pug-faced man, sometimes called Brown, but more often known by the name of Herrod. Herrod was not too pleased with life: Kryn had not been entirely deceived by that story of Craigie's lucky escape from a bullet in the back.

The short, obese figure of von Hauf might also have been recognised by Kerr and Craigie, while Gregoroff Shirin dared to show his face more than the others, perhaps because he felt there was no danger of being seen by people he wanted to avoid.

The four men hurried to a waiting car, and were taken luxuriously but along a bad road—Vallena was a hilly country, and Baj was built in a valley—towards the centre of the city.

At a large house, not far away from the royal palace, occupied by the reigning Prince Renol, who was less than a puppet in his minister's hands, the car stopped. Large iron gates were opened, and the men were carried through.

They were admitted to the house by a liveried footman. Shirin, von Hauf and Herrod were ushered into one of the reception-rooms—the house was palatial in size as well as its servants—while Mr. Kryn went, unattended, up the stairs.

He reached a door painted black, and pressed a bell-push sharply three or four times. There was a pause, and a click. Kryn then opened the door and entered.

At a black desk in a black chair sat a woman dressed entirely in black.

"Well, Kryn?" Kryn bowed very low.

"I had your orders, Highness, and I have returned."

"The others are with you?"

"Those you told to come."

"And the situation in England?"

"I think it can safely be said that no one suspects the truth, Highness."

For the first time her face relaxed, and the smile on it was a long way from pleasant.

"That is good, Kryn. You left something behind you to make it obvious you have come to Vallena?"

"Your orders have been obeyed in every detail, Highness."

She nodded again, and her smile tightened.

"We are nearly ready, then. The woman Mondell—she is coming?"

"She has not yet said so, Highness"—he spoke on a slow, monotonous level—"but it is almost certain. We shall be advised by eleven-thirty, English time, to-morrow."

"And her husband?"

"He will be cared for."

"I see. And now—Kerr. He is still alive. He has so many lives, that man, I am almost convinced he is as dangerous as I have been told, Kryn."

"He is a man," said Kryn simply.

"And mortal." She laughed, a high-pitched, tinkling sound. "Now that they will know where you are, Kerr will come. His injury is not serious?"

"I do not think it will detain him more than two or three days, Highness."

"Will he bring others?"

"It is likely."

"I should like to see Kerr," she said slowly, "before he dies. He sounds interesting. Well, Kryn, progress had been well maintained here, you see. The tariff has gone through, much against the Prince's wishes, but it has gone through. The first of many, Kryn. And we are already estranged from Moscow. It was foolish of Moscow to allow Vonovich to assassinate the unfortunate Sigmund Prell, eh, Kryn?"

For once the man's dark eyes showed a lurking smile.

"Most unfortunate, your Highness. Russia, and soon England, will be offended. And then . . ."

"And then," said Katrina, Princess of Vallena, "we shall see, eh, Kryn, what those great countries can make of our tiny State? All right, Kryn, you may rest."

On the same day the English papers carried still further reports of the coming aeronautical adventures of the play-girl Princess of Vallena.

Mr. Freddie Kingham, after a fruitless endeavor to make the men at Scotland Yard soften their hearts, had returned to Camberley.

Mr. Joshua Kingham was already in bed. Freddie rang for Bennet—a maid had let him in. Bennet was also in bed.

Bennet, decided Freddie Kingham, would have to get up. He sent Browning, but Browning reported that Bennet's door was locked. Fugacious and more determined than ever, Freddie Kingham discovered a master key to the bedroom, and unlocked the butler's door.

He pushed it open and stepped inside, and then his fingers tightened spasmodically about the handle. The blood ebbed from his face, and he had again a desire to be violently sick. An icy coldness started in

his stomach and spread through his body, and he did not hear Browning say under his breath:

"Wot yer standing there for? I—Gawd!"

For Browning peered over Freddie's shoulder and saw that Bennet had been shot.

Kerr, hobbling on one foot and an oak stick, returned from Bennet's room some two hours after the discovery. The local police had taken finger-prints and photographs and then locked and guarded the door until the arrival of the Department Z men, and Kerr had seen exactly the same thing as Freddie Kingham. With more experience, if not with less distaste, he had surveyed the room and made several discoveries that could only be called interesting.

Dodo Trale had come down with Kerr and Lola. He had been making inquiries of the servants, with Lois, and when Kerr reached the morning-room, Lok was saying to young Kingham:

"We would like to see your father, Mr. Kingham. Is he in?"

"Why, yes—" Freddie was too shaken to enjoy talking with "Miss Dale." "That is, he's supposed to be in bed. Oh, Lord, he can't . . ."

Inspired by the same fear, Dodo, Lola and Freddie Kingham turned from the drawing-room. Kerr watched them go ruefully. Had he had two usable legs he would have been at Joshua Kingham's door yards ahead of the others. As it was he had to wait to see whether the artist was all right. But there were several things he could think about, and he hobbled across to the telephone. He was connected with Craigie quickly, and after the preliminaries he said confidently:

"I think Horn's cleared, Gordon."

"Horn is? How?"

"This fellow Bennet was shot through the mouth, and a .32 automatic with his finger-prints is by the bedside. No doubt at all that he gripped it fast. On his dressing-table he left the usual suicide note—with explanations."

"So it was Bennet, was it?" Craigie, Kerr knew, was not greatly surprised.

"It looks like it," said Kerr cautiously. "According to the letter he was approached on Sunday when he was at a pub by a very tall fellow—Kryn to a T. He was told that the police would probably arrest Matthew Horn, but in any case when they came again from London he was to hand that envelope and the notes—with forged initials—to Kingham. Apparently Kryn knew Freddie could not keep it from us. The payment was a hundred pounds. Bennet's been betting—I'll check up on that—and badly needed the money. Everything went off as planned, except his conscience."

"H'm," said Craigie.

"Apparently when Bennet realised the spot he had put his employer in he couldn't stand it. And yesterday he put most of the hundred pounds on a horse that arrived after the first three. He's several hundred in debt, and he took the easy way out."

"H'm," said Craigie again, and Kerr wondered whether he was being doubtful just for the sake of it. "Will you check the betting and the debts?"

"Yes, before I leave. On the face of it, though, we can't hold Horn."

"We can watch him," said Craigie, "although this crowd seem to disappear into thin air. Well, get back as soon as you can, and mind that ankle!"

While Kerr had been talking to Craigie,

Lois, Dodo and young Freddie Kingham had been compelled again to use a master-key, and for some seconds Freddie had seemed likely to faint. But no grisly sight had met their eyes. The bed had not been slept in, but there were signs of hurried packing. No message was left behind, and Joshua Kingham, that large, fat artist, had flown in the night. It was a lot more than interesting, especially after Kerr told them—except Freddie, who was acutely miserable—of the Horn-Bennet development.

"I'm beginning to wish we'd paid more attention to Joshua," said Kerr, glancing at several water-colours that did nothing to help the harmony of the drawing-room's decorative scheme.

Lois needed no telling it had been a male household. And then she saw the water-color, in a corner of the head and shoulders of a man. A middle-aged man, quite obviously portrayed with the idea of flattering the sister. Lois' eyes narrowed and her voice was very soft.

"See that picture, Bob?"
Kerr screwed up his eyes and grunted.
"Joshua painted himself, and he obviously saw the good in him. Why?"
"It's Joshua Kingham?" Lois' voice was tense.

"It is, or I'm a Dutchman."
"I've seen the gentleman," said Lois still softly. "At Bene Mondell's flat. He called himself Smith and offered her terms to work for Kryn—and you, Dodo, followed him."

Dodo Trale had followed Mr. Smith, or Joshua Kingham, to a studio in Chelsea. But Kingham, with the astuteness that seemed born in the gentlemen who helped Kryn—and the Princess of Vallena, although the Department did not realise that yet—had managed to slip away; Trale had left the job to younger agents, but he admitted he might well have failed himself.

It seemed obvious now that the reason for the trouble with the Lane House folk was the third-rate artist who, beneath his plausible air, had succeeded in convincing Kerr and the others that he was a useless wastrel, caring only for beer and his brother-in-law's money.

"Does the Bennet affair really look like suicide?" Craigie asked, when he saw Kerr that evening.

Kerr nodded.
"I'm prepared to swear it was, Gordon. The betting was all right, and he was in a devil of a mess financially. What have you done with Horn?"

Craigie laughed.

"For once I managed to get someone else to do it, Bob. Wishart saw him at Dowling Street, apologised for the mistake, explained it was connected with Bettin's murder and stressed the need for absolute secrecy. Horn seems to have taken it very well indeed. He should be home in an hour. As our brighter men aren't available, I've asked Fellowes to put a couple of really good sergeants on him, and he and Freddie Kingham will be well watched."

"Well, now, I've had word from Loftus. He's already arrived in Baj—as a German commercial traveller. What time's your train in the morning?"

"We can go by air, Gordon. It's not only quicker, it might be safer. I know the country."

Craigie said that he would rather they flew to Baj, but he did not want Kerr to have to work the injured foot too much, and that Trale was no use as a pilot.

Kerr laughed, with some satisfaction.
"The foot isn't overworked at the controls, Gordon, and I'd be happier that way."

Kerr cocked a thumb towards the observation-glass in the cabin floor.

"Baj," he said simply.
Dodo Trale and Lois Dacre jerked into wakefulness. They were flying at five thousand feet, and the rocky, rugged country of Vallena was spread beneath them.

Neither Lois nor Trale had visited Vallena before, and Kerr explained a little.
"The river's the Pruth," he said, "but here they call it Pruda. Links up with the Danube near Galatz. Carries half that shipping we've been talking about, I shouldn't wonder. See the white star?"

"What is it?" asked Trale.
"The Vallenan royal palace," said Kerr. "And the square block slightly north is the House of Representatives. The half-moon to the south is the Princess' home. Wonderful gardens down there—better, if anything, than the Tuilleries. Or Hampton Court," he added patriotically. "See that gap in the hills—the one with the white patch? The middle?"

"What's this? I—spy?" demanded Dodo fippantly.

"In dogmatic circles they call it espionage," retorted Lois. "What's the gap, Bob?"

"Our landing-field. It's a private one, owned by the Pruda Iron and Aeroplane Company—and subsidised by English money. Craigie always keeps a plane there, and there are two other fields and planes within fairly easy distance. Just in case of emergency you'd better each have directions."

Baj was well behind them as Kerr handed two pieces of paper—actually letterheads—to the others. They bore the names and address of two firms, and at the same addresses Craigie had an agent always in readiness.

Lois noticed that Kerr was concentrating on the landing-field, and she wondered why he was flying at five thousand feet, when he could have been ready to land by now. Then suddenly she saw the two monoplane take off from the patch of white and fly towards them. She turned round abruptly, her heart in her mouth.

Kerr was smiling, and she felt a sharp relief.

"What's it mean, Bob?"

"One plane—get out of here: it's not safe. Two—come down, you angels, no one but me is expecting you. It's the arrangement with our man. He knew we were coming, of course. Best place to land, this. People expect aeroplanes, and they arouse no comment."

Kerr took his plane down smoothly. Mechanics, white-smocked, and through the windows looking no different from their counterparts at Heston, were coming up with checks. Kerr shut off the engine.

"Tuck your chins well in, in case there's a camera about," he said. "Ah, there's Shilla. He's our man here."

Kerr made the introductions as they went towards the offices of the Pruda Iron Company and its subsidiary aeroplane concern. Lois kept her eyes towards the ground, but no one seemed curious. It was surprising, in fact, how few people there were about.

Shilla, using a sing-song English that reminded her of country Welsh, explained quickly:

"They are all away, yes, Kerr? I send

them here—there—lots of places. You no want to be seen, no?"

"You're perfect, as usual," said Kerr, and Lois learned from that that Shilla liked to be praised. He was, in fact, a vain little man in many ways, but as good-hearted as could be. In his private dining-room he had prepared a meal that made them stop worrying about the hunger which had started half-way through the flight.

It was half-past five when they had finished. Shilla had fussed round them like a broody hen, but had not asked a single question. Kerr had asked plenty, and as he eyed an excellent white wine he asked quietly:

"What's the general opinion of the tariffs, Shilla?"

"Well, well. Some good, some bad. Always that way, yes. Those who like British goods—bad. Those who don't—good. How else should it be?"

"Who sponsored the bill?" asked Kerr, and Shilla looked blank.

"Who what, Kerr?"

"Who supported it?" explained Kerr, his eyes gleaming.

"Oh-ho! Now you ask. Just the same, Kerr. Those who dislike England, yes. Prell—how sad, Prell—he was for it. Yes, very strong for it. The Nazi Party, yes. They wish for all tariffs, up—up—up, but for German and Austrian. The fools! Against was the Russian Party—the Socialist Right."

That, Kerr knew, was exactly what Craigie had already learned from his men in Vallena, and it was not particularly helpful.

"Did you hear any rumors about Dorlenet and the others who were told to send the wrong stuff to England?" he asked.

"Not—not even"—Shilla searched desperately for the right word, and found it with a flourish of moustaches—"not even a nibble, Kerr! Not—one—nibble!"

"Oh, well," said Kerr, "you've hooked our rooms in Baj?"

"But of course, it has been done."

"Then I think . . ." suggested Kerr, and Shilla needed no more prompting. A car was put at their disposal, and the trio drove along a rough road towards the capital of the tinpot little State. Despite the things on her mind, Lois had the time to appreciate the beauty of the country. It had the Tyrol easily beaten, she decided. A glorious place for a holiday, with the mountains about them and the valleys on either side, rocky and yet glorious with vegetation.

She heard Kerr swear unexpectedly.

He was driving, having refused an offer of a chauffeur, and he suddenly put his foot down on the accelerator as hard as it would go. Out of the corner of her eyes Lois saw something flying through the air towards them. She felt her stomach turn over, and instinctively she covered her face in her hands.

The needle shot up. Sixty—seventy—eighty. A second seemed a minute and the waiting was ghastly. The bang of the thing on top of the saloon seemed inevitable. And then the roar came from behind them. The back of the big car was lifted like a handcart and swivelled round, Kerr helpless to hold it. The windows blew outwards—mercifully—and Lois' eyes were dazzled by the blinding yellow flare that had come with the explosion. But in her heart there was the desperate fear so rarely missing these days, a fear that they would crash.

The drop on either side of the road was at least five hundred feet.

No man on earth could have held the car, and Kerr had to let it do what it wanted. It went round like a top, skidding and leaning perilously towards the right, and deeper, drop. Lois was gripping Trale's arm tightly. She saw the rocky slopes of the hill very clearly; it was like the ravenous jaws of a beast, waiting for them. The car lurched further, the engine stalled, and Kerr braked slowly for the first time.

He knew that the front wheels were almost over. They were moving at ten miles an hour, slowly, agonisingly, towards the edge and a disaster that could end only in death.

And then Kerr started the engine and pushed her into reverse.

For a sickening moment the car seemed to balance like a see-saw over the edge of the valley. Then the wheels found purchase and it moved backwards. Trale had his head out of the rear window.

"Steady at the back, Bob!"

The big car stretched across the road, and it would be a work of art to turn it just there. But so Kerr put on the brakes again and they came to a standstill. Lois laughed. The sound was high-pitched and nearly hysterical.

"We—we're still here!"

"The old firm," smiled Dodo Trale, taking his cane out and offering cigarettes as calmly as he had done in Kerr's flat on the previous night. "Not so easy to kill, even in Vallens. Take a cigarette, girl!"

He snapped the words, and Lois jerked herself together. Kerr was leaning over for a cigarette, and Trale lit all three with the one match, defying superstition.

Kerr's lips parted a little, the sun glinting on his teeth as he spoke:

"Funny how they like working in ones. I saw the little swab standing behind a boulder, and he threw well and truly. At the speed we were going it would have been plumb in the middle and good-bye to little us. But that's not the thing."

"No-o," said Lois, and it was a queer fact that all three of them forgot how near they had been to death in a realisation that the hoped-for secrecy of their arrival was a delusion. Kerr's cigarette was burning unusually fast.

"Yes, they've spotted us. That's bad for Sibilla, I'm afraid. Dodo, feel like a walk?"

Trale shrugged.

"I never do, but I'll try it for once."

"Out back to the factory—it's not more than two miles—and tell the old fellow what's happened. He'll probably have to get away. Meet us again in the Renol Hotel, Wilstrasse. All right?"

Trale took a gun out of his hip-pocket and another from his shoulder holster, glanced at them in turn and said that everything was in order. Between Trale and Kerr there was a quick understanding.

Lois looked at Kerr, who was watching Trale walk quickly, and apparently without the slightest nervousness, along the rough road.

"And what are we—" she started; but Kerr moved so quickly that Lois jumped back. Kerr's right hand came from his pocket, yet it seemed still to be moving when he touched the trigger of his gun. The report was loud beside the car, and cordite reeked in her nostrils. But above the noise came a high-pitched cry a fraction of a second later.

Lois saw the man then. He was still near the boulder from which the bomb had

been thrown, and he was hopping about wildly on one foot.

"First blood, I think," said Kerr, "and the bait worked. Stay here, sweetheart and if anyone comes either way, yell for me."

He did not give her a chance to make any other suggestion, but hopped out of the car and swung towards the wounded man and Dodo Trale, who had turned back, seeing Kerr's victim. They reached the man within a few seconds of each other. He was stretched out on the ground, and, judging from the villainy of his expression he would have used his gun had it not slipped from his grasp during his fall.

The captive might not be a Vallonian, but he certainly was not English; the torrent of abuse that poured in French from his lips suggested yet another nationality in the game of the commercial tricks. Kerr's French was more than good enough to pass muster, and he spoke brusquely:

"Who sent you?"

"You would like to know, hein?"

Kerr laughed, and the sound startled the wounded man. Even Trale looked surprised.

"I'm going to know," said Kerr, "but it can keep."

Then as the man, evidently overcome by shock and terror, went off into a dead faint, he continued:

"I saw him behind the boulder, Dodo, his gun trained on you. Watch for others."

"What are you proposing to do with the blighter?" asked Trale.

"Take him into Baj," said Bob Kerr.

Between Sibilla's factory and the capital itself were five miles of rocky countryside, and the next mile seemed to Lois worse than the first stretch. The road was poor, and if the depth of the descent on either side lessened, the rocks towered in places perilously close to the car. She wondered what would happen if another bomb-thrower or gunman were waiting. Kerr seemed to have forgotten the one incident, and the man in the back did not wake up.

They came suddenly to Baj.

Lois could hardly believe her eyes. It was a walled city, and there was actually a gate—open it was true—separating the country from the city itself. The white-painted walls made her think of the East. In India she would have expected it; in Baj it seemed fantastic.

But there was a welcome sign of modernity. Fifty yards from the gates was a cafe and petrol station that would not have disgraced the Great West Road. Kerr drove in, without blinking an eye, and shot a spate of words at a one-eyed man who came forward. The one-eyed man promptly disappeared into the garage.

"What was the gist of that?" demanded Lois.

"I told him in Vallonian plus a bit of French and a spot of German," smiled Kerr. "That we'd had an accident, I wanted another car quickly, for my friend in the back was hurt, and tell the manager pronto. But it's all right. We're among friends."

"More friends?"

Kerr cocked his head on one side.

"The longer you work for Craigie," he said, "and that means the longer you're engaged and not married, the more you'll be impressed by his organisation. Every vantage spot holds Craigie's men. Mostly he picks politically pro-British people. Occasionally money speaks, and where money speaks we have to be careful, because we haven't all the cash in the world. The owner of this place, though,

was subsidised by Craigie—another bit of taxpayer's money gone! Watch and listen."

From the garage stepped a burly-looking ruffian Lois would have preferred not to meet in a dark English lane. He was scowling and he hardly seemed the type to encourage trade. A shock of blue-black hair rose upwards sharply from his forehead, and a three-day stubble covered most of his face.

Kerr put one forearm across the steering-wheel and held his hand palm upwards. He tapped the middle of the palm with his other little finger. The ruffian spat on the ground and then pulled his nose sharply.

Like Masonic signs, thought Lois, as Kerr spoke in English.

"I'm in a hurry, One Seven One. I'd like a large car, and this fellow in the back had better be moved inside the garage. Will you get rid of your mechanics for five minutes?"

"Sartain, Number Two!" The garage proprietor took it quite as calmly as Kerr. "They've gone, most. Drive in!"

His expression did not change as he turned and walked stiffly back to the garage. Kerr pushed the gear into reverse. As he drove into the shed, the one-eyed man came out, taking up a stand by the petrol-pumps. Lois was telling herself that she did not know a half of Craigie's tricks yet.

The change-over to a large cream sedan took them very few minutes. Kerr said practically nothing to Number One Seven One, who responded in kind until Kerr asked:

"Have any others been along since yesterday?"

"None others, Number Two."

"Thanks," said Kerr, and an English five pound note changed hands. The ruffian and One Eye stood and watched the cream car out of sight, and Lois was beginning to feel that they would not be so lonely in Baj after all.

"You told us of the other three, Bob, with aeroplanes; are there many more besides this fellow?"

"We've five men in Baj together," Kerr told her as he drove under the archway and they entered the city itself. "This fellow, the man at the Renol Hotel, a member of the Royal Palace staff, one of the Government minor officials, and a leather merchant, Wilstrasse. When we get to the hotel I'll give you a complete list, and if by chance we do get separated you'll be all right with any one of them. Meanwhile, here's Baj."

Lois sat back and looked about her.

She was impressed by the width of the streets, and, apart from the white stone of which the buildings were chiefly made, there was little to remind her of the East. The people walking the streets—growing more numerous as they left the gateway—might have been in Paris or Berlin.

"The hotel quarter comes next, and we'll be able to unload," said Kerr.

Lois was conscious of a tightness across her chest. She had a queer feeling that they were being watched, and she knew that Kerr was on tenterhooks.

Certainly no car had followed them from the factory, and only the wounded man in the rear served to remind them of the single attack. But who would be such fools as to send only a single man?

Kerr answered her thoughts, that had run closely on his own:

"Of course, the Kryn crowd over here is probably as illegal as it is in England. They'd have to watch carefully. One man's less suspicious than two, but I don't like things somehow. I— Good lord! Head down!"

Lois obeyed, but not until she had seen the man in the rear of the other car.

His height was obvious, for his head was almost touching the roof of the car. He was looking away from the sedan, and talking to a woman who struck Lois at that first glimpse, as being superbly beautiful. But in the front, next to the chauffeur, was Rene Mondell; and that seemed considerably more important.

"Was it Kryn?" Lois put the question breathlessly.

"It was Lady Mondell anyhow. Look through the back, Lois, and see where it goes."

Lois spoke swiftly:

"The Princess' palace, Bob. It's turned in."

Kerr pulled in to the side of the road. Lois turned to watch the other car. It reached the imposing steps of the home of Katrina, Princess of Valena, and pulled up. A few seconds later Rene Mondell, the very tall man—Kryn for a certainty—and the other woman climbed out. They walked up the steps of the palace, and as they disappeared Kerr started the car.

"Well, well, well! So Katrina's in it?"

"If it was Kryn."

"We'll soon hear from Lady Mondell," said Kerr, pushing the sedan into the stream of traffic. "It's a small world, and we can't say we're having an uneventful day."

Lois was silent until they pulled up outside a large building, one of several built apparently by the same architect.

An illuminated sign showed that it was the Renol Hotel, named after the Prince, of course. Adjacent to the main entrance was the garage-way, and Kerr took the car straight in.

Lois, on tenterhooks, wondered how they would get the wounded man inside without attracting a great deal of notice. Kerr made sure the fellow was still unconscious, and left the car where it stood. No one approached them, but on one side of a large garage a boy was hiding a car down. Lois wished he would keep his eyes away from them, but Kerr's voice was low and cheerful:

"Get straight up, darling; I'll follow you in five minutes. Room thirty, on the second floor. Stay there until I come, and if Loftus is there he's to stay too."

He smiled, and Lois had perforce to go through the side door of the hotel. The inside of the place struck her as warm and pleasant enough, yet furnished on the ultra-modern style. A uniformed attendant fussed about her, and a page-boy led her towards the lift, taking her as far as the door of Number Thirty. She felt exceptionally tired as she opened the door, nodded the page-boy away, and stepped inside. By habit, she closed the door behind her.

And then she stifled a cry on her lips.

Standing in one corner of a large room was a tall, very fair man, with rather too-prominent blue eyes. She recognised him in a flash, just as she recognised the menace of the gun in his right hand.

It was Gregoroff Shirin.

Shirin smiled, looking very well satisfied. "Come in, my dear lady. At last I am happy to know who works with our friend Kerr." But for a slight stiltedness, his English was perfect.

Lois also smiled; in the moment that had

passed since seeing the man, both her nerve and her pulse had returned. Her one wish was to get at the automatic in her bag; but Shirin did not look as though he would be taken in by any false move. Caution was indicated.

And she was telling herself that Kerr had sent her up alone; Kerr never did things or took chances without a reason.

"It's good to feel you're satisfied," she said, and walked to the easiest chair. She sank down slowly, her eyes on Shirin all the time, and she left her bag on a small coffee-table near her. "Oh, I'm tired!"

Shirin's eyes held a glint of admiration. "So. Not, perhaps, as tired as you will be, Miss—"

"Dale."

Whether he was doubtful of the truth of that or not he did not say, but his gun moved a fraction, training on her stomach.

"Thank you! It is most pitiful that you come for a visit to this beautiful city, even by air, and then you are not allowed to benefit, eh? And so unwise of Kerr to use a woman. They cannot be made to stop talking, eh?"

"They've a reputation," said Lois.

Shirin smiled, very widely.

"It is good that you understand. There are a few questions you will be asked, and if they are answered—well, I believe the Valenians can be most hospitable. Otherwise—by some misfortune they might make you most uncomfortable—and tired! But come, we are in a hurry, Miss Dale. Any time now I have reason to believe Kerr will arrive. He will be most shocked to find the bird sunk, eh? Now you have rested, over here. The door by me, and then—the fire-escape, that is your word for it? Most convenient, Miss Dale. Please! Do not make the mistake of moving the wrong way."

Two things came to Lois' mind.

She was in no immediate danger if she did as she was told, and Shirin wanted only to get her away from the hotel. Obviously to ask questions. That might conceivably be Kerr's idea, but if it was, why had he not warned her?

She stood up slowly.

"What undertaking do you give that I shall be safe if I come with you, Mr. Shirin?"

The Russian's eyes widened; obviously he had not expected her to know his name. But there was something malicious in his smile, and his too-prominent eyes reminded her unpleasantly of the fanatic in the back of the car.

"It is hard for me to say, Miss Dale. On others than me rest such things as that."

Lois stepped towards the door by which the man was standing and as she grew near him she tried a shot in the dark: or in the gloom.

"I see. The Princess has a reputation for being a good hostess, Mr. Shirin."

"The—Princess!"

She had flung more than a shot in the dark; her words had the effect of a bomb. In that second she could have dashed the gun out of Shirin's hand, but she resisted the temptation. There was some purpose in this, she was sure, and she had no desire to damage Kerr's schemes.

Shirin looked a different man: the suavity had gone and in its place was a flaming anger. He gripped her wrist, twisting her arm up viciously, and her cheeks went pale with the sudden sharp pain.

"Talk! Who told you that?"

She stood very still, and her elbow seemed like breaking in two.

"Let me go."

"Talk!" His eyes were blazing, very close to hers, and she could feel his hot breath on her cheeks. The man looked a devil, but it was because he was afraid. Afraid! And if she refused to answer he would break her arm.

"Crai—Craige told me. Who told him I don't know."

Shirin looked as though he disbelieved her and would gladly have snapped her arm, but he flung her away suddenly, and she staggered against the door.

"Get outside, you—!"

She felt weak, physically and mentally. That pain in her elbow was getting worse instead of better, and her stomach was queasy. She wished she had taken the chance that he had once given her, but it was too late.

The slanting sun, coming through a gap in the ring of hills surrounding Baj, like age-old sentinels, made her narrow her eyes. She reached the iron-grilled fire-escape, and now Shirin had her other wrist, holding it tightly and forcing her down. He held his gun inside his pocket, and she knew he was afraid of being seen in dubious circumstances.

The Hotel Renol was built on a square, with a courtyard—part garage, part garden, part tennis courts—inside the four walls. Perhaps twenty people were there, but no one glanced up at them. To look at there was nothing unusual in two people coming from the same room.

She was walking downwards quickly, and but for Shirin's hold she would have fallen. Once she glanced round, seeing Shirin's face tense as they neared the courtyard.

She shivered, despite the lazy warmth of the evening, and they reached the bottom. A narrow passage led from the courtyard to the street. She saw cars passing as Shirin urged her towards it, glanced round quickly, desperately, in the hope of sight of Kerr.

And then an unbounded relief flooded her mind and the tension of her body relaxed. For a monstrous figure had materialised from the passage—there were doors leading from it into the hotel, she saw. He was one of the biggest men she was likely to see, and despite his almost shaven head and the short quiff at the forehead, despite his horribly ill-fitting, light grey clothes, she recognised Bill Loftus—or Herr Schmidt, traveller in beer!

Bill was wearing large, round glasses that gave him an appearance of perpetual surprise. Perhaps he was surprised to see them, but she doubted it. His expression did not change as he came towards them, blinking as he came from the shadows into the full light of day.

Shirin's hand tightened about the girl's wrist, but he was not suspicious.

Loftus grew level with them, apparently without seeing Lois. For a dreadful moment she thought she had been mistaken.

And then, as he passed, Loftus shot out his right hand. It fastened round Shirin's forearm, jerking the hand from his pocket and the gun inside. Shirin's face went livid, and his cry came involuntarily.

"Right about turn," murmured Loftus to his car.

Lois took her hand away, and for a moment she thought Shirin would make a run for it. But the big "Herr Schmidt" also had a gun in his pocket, and the muzzle

was poking into the Russian's ribs. Shirin turned round like an automaton. Loftus winked at Lois behind his absurd glasses.

"Lead the way, will you, fraulein."

Lois went back along the fire-escape with the same sounds of tennis and laughter in her ears, with her elbow still painful but not aching so acutely. She felt like singing, and she was preparing a few words for Kerr's ears.

The rear door of the suite was unlatched. Lois again went in first, but this time she went more carefully, to see Kerr stretched out on a settee, his eyes closed, a cigarette between his lips, and the laces of his shoes undone. In a corner, awake, but bound and gagged and therefore silent, was the bomb-thrower.

Kerr jumped up quickly, seeing the pallor of Lois' cheeks.

"Sorry, Lois, but I was afraid of something odd, and you were the best bait this time. If I'd said a word you wouldn't have convinced our Gregoroff that you were surprised. Any damage?"

Lois was rubbing her wrist, and Kerr saw the Russian's finger-marks. Kerr's expression as he glanced towards Shirin was not pleasant.

"I see! Well, two can play that game. What did he want?"

Lois explained the gist of their conversation, including the fact that Shirin had virtually admitted that the Princess was in the game.

"The lovely Princess Kat," said Kerr, his eyes very narrow. "And that makes it look as though none of the political parties are in it, that Katrina's working on her own. Lois, will you hop into the bedroom for ten minutes?"

The bedroom door closed on Lois Dacre, and she saw that there was a large window; but there was no possible way of reaching the room from outside, except by the door or with a ladder. The white walls were sheer. Satisfied of that, she lay down, trying not to wonder what Kerr was doing to Shirin.

But she need not have worried.

In thirty seconds Shirin was on his feet, facing two grim-eyed, powerfully built men who obviously intended to have no nonsense. In sixty he had proof of it. In ninety he was sweating from every pore, his pallor had gone and his face was beetroot-red.

"I will—I will tell you! All I know, all!" he stammered.

"Proceed," murmured Mr. Loftus.

"It—it is not much!" Shirin was wailing, terrified lest the others should think he was holding back. "For a year—just more than a year—I have been working. Me and von Hauf and Criff. Adolf Kryn—he was giving the instructions, not until last week did I know the Princess."

"When you say working," asked Kerr, in an easy-chair now, with his injured foot resting on a stool, "what does it mean?"

Shirin waved his hands wildly.

"First—it was among the people, here. Like Dorianne. Making them ship the wrong goods, yes, to England. Those who would not—we forced!"

"How?" Kerr knew, but wanted confirmation.

"We—we would threaten them. Frighten, yes! Once—twice—perhaps more—we sank ships."

"I see," said Kerr very gently. "And were there crews on board those ships?"

"But yes—of course."

"You had boats standing by to take them out of the sea?" asked Kerr gently.

"Certainly not! Why—"

Shirin suddenly understood the drift of the question, realised that he was confessing to the murder of a dozen or more sailors who had no more knowledge of the reason for their death than a two-year-old child. There was something deadly in Kerr's expression then.

"I see. And you arranged this, I suppose, by placing time-bombs on board?"

"It was not me! I was ordered—Kryn—"

"Why'd you do it?" The question was like the slash of a whip, and Shirin was shivering.

"I—it was my work! I was paid—"

"All right. Your part was to arrange these things and to put pressure on the merchants. What did von Hauf do?"

Just what von Hauf did was uncertain, it seemed. One of his tasks was to reckon the amount of trade that was being lost between the two countries.

"And Criff?" asked Kerr.

"Criff—he was so used to it, yes."

"To what?" demanded Kerr, and Shirin looked towards the door, desperately, as though he hoped that someone would come in and save him from telling all that he knew. But the door was shut and locked.

"To—to providing—providing—"

Shirin was gulping, and then it came with a rush: "To providing food, in times of war! All arrangements were for him, yes, he was the best man in the world for it, his business, it was the biggest. He had prepared—it is all ready! And then—then you found Criff. You caught him. Kryn, he was watching. He guesses that Criff will say that Prell is working. To stop all other things being told, Kryn telephones—to the Princess. She arranges for the death of Prell. Kryn, he kills Criff—"

Kerr was staring at him stony-eyed. Criff had organised the provisions for war. For war! He pushed his hand across his forehead. "What war?"

Shirin was leaning forward in his seat. His eyes were more prominent than ever, and his lips were shaking and wet.

"No—I do not know! Believe me I do not—"

"Where did Criff make the arrangements?"

"In—in Vallena."

"Where else?"

"I do not know! Criff, he has been everywhere! France—Germany—Poland—Russia—all over Europe! You must know that! But where he has been working I was not told. I—"

Kerr stood up, and Shirin cowered back. But Kerr was smiling, if not altogether with humor. He felt a savage satisfaction at what he had learned.

"All right, Shirin. You're going to be looked after for a while, and afterwards you'll have to answer the Vallenian Courts."

He took a handkerchief from one pocket, and from another a small blue bottle. Shirin was staring wide-eyed as Kerr soaked a corner of the handkerchief. Then the Russian heaved himself out of his chair, and his voice was choking. But Loftus pushed him back, and held him like a babe in arms. There was a reek of chloroform. Shirin squirmed for a moment, and then went still.

Kerr took a small rubber bag from his pocket, and replaced the handkerchief and the bottle. And then, as though he had suddenly remembered the man, he swung round on the fanatic.

He smiled suddenly and with real humor.

The man who had thrown the bomb had seen the treatment of Shirin, and what was worse he had seen Shirin's complete capitulation. Few men could have gone to pieces more thoroughly or with a more unnerving effect on a helpless watcher than Gregoroff Shirin. Kerr made a great play of lighting another cigarette, while Loftus untied the handkerchief from the fanatic's face. The fellow's words came out with a spate, and his French was fluent—almost too fluent for Kerr.

But in five minutes Kerr learned that the man's name was Vintelle, that he was a rabid Communist with strong Russian sympathies; that he was one of a small but fanatical band of men in Vallena who urged Meggel of the Left Party to his wilder schemes, and that in this band there sometimes figured prominently the mysterious Mr. Kryn.

Vintelle suffered the same fate as Shirin after that five minutes. Kerr took up the telephone and dictated a cable to a small firm in London, apparently to do with the present state of affairs in Baj. Concerning—Loftus pointed out with some sarcasm—lingerie.

And some hour and a half later Gordon Craigie had a telephone call from the manager of the underwear firm, and had the cable read out to him. He decoded it quickly, and read the gist of all that Kerr had so far discovered.

All within a few hours of reaching Vallena, thought Craigie with a slow smile. And then he stopped smiling, for the news was serious. He telephoned the Rt. Hon. David Wishart.

Meanwhile Kerr had gone to tell Lois it was all right, and found her stretched out on the bed fast asleep, and still wearing her coat and shoes. She stirred a little when he took off her shoes and tip-toed from the room. Loftus was sitting back with satisfaction, for the helpful hall-porter—Department Z agent 306—at the Renol Hotel had arranged to hold the prisoners in a small box-room in the roof, and Loftus had helped to transport them. Moreover, Loftus had at last been able to send for beer.

He saw Kerr standing in the doorway with Lois' shoes, and choked.

"Heaven help us! You look a perfect family man, Bob!"

"It's family man you," smiled Bob Kerr. "Well, we're living and learning. Where's Oundle?"

"Gone to see all the agents. He should be back any time."

Kerr nodded, asked a few questions, and sat back for ten minutes.

He had pulled off a successful gamble, which was about all his work could ever be called. He had seen Loftus in the garage, as Lois had gone into the hotel, and Loftus had told him that Shirin had visited Suite Thirty by the back way. Kerr had therefore waited by the main door until the porter had brought a message that Shirin and Lois had started down the escape. Then he had entered and waited, knowing Loftus could be trusted on the job below.

But he had to face two things.

First, the others knew about Suite Thirty, which had been booked by Loftus together with Suite Thirty-one, next door.

Second: Kryn and Katrina were preparing for war.

"We've made the first really big step, anyhow," he said aloud. "Now we're stuck until we hear something from Lady Mondell. Traie should roll up any time, and Oundle. Unless Oundle was spotted."

"No one in this world would ever take him for more than a fool, and a big fool," opined Bill Loftus. "Now listen."

But Kerr did not oblige, for he heard foot-steps outside the door, and cocked his ears. A knocking came, thunderously. He jumped up, nodded Loftus towards the door and went to the window overlooking the courtyard. The tennis was still going on, as though nothing out of the way was happening.

But four men, uniformed and ostentatiously armed, were standing at the foot of the fire-escape leading from Suite Thirty. And when Loftus opened the door, with his right hand in his pocket and about his gun, three other representatives of the Valenian military police, with an officer in trappings that would have made him look absurd if it had not come with such a devastating shock, was goose-stepping into the room.

With both hands in his trousers pocket, Kerr looked at him.

"What does this mean, my man?"

The officer obviously understood both English and insolence. His three men stood in the doorway, which was left wide open, and stared blankly above one another's heads. Loftus wished he knew what to do; but no man in the world would have seen in Kerr other than an English tourist of the more-than-usual arrogance.

"Ho! You vos Rob-airt—Mac-Mill-an—Kerr?"

Was it worth a lie? Kerr wondered, and decided quickly that it was not.

"I am."

The officer's moustaches went upwards.

"Ho, admit it, yes! Ex-sellent! You vos register 'ere as Arth-air—Brown?"

"Well?" Kerr was wondering if Lois would wake up, to whom he owed this visit, and whether it was worth showing force. There were probably as many men downstairs in the foyer as there were in the courtyard, and the odds seemed hopeless.

"Ex-sellent! You air und-air arrest!"

"My dear sir," began Kerr; but the officer cut him short with a magnificent gesture. Two of the riflemen with him goose-stepped forward, ranging themselves on either side of Craigie's chief agent. Loftus was beginning to feel it was very close to the end of things. They would be after him in a moment.

Kerr put his hands in his pockets and took out cigarettes, to the officer's obvious disapproval.

"This is absurd," said Kerr, lighting a cigarette slowly and blowing smoke over the head of the fierce little man. "I am an Englishman, travelling under the protection of—"

"Ze Englis—pah!" The officer spat, giving his opinion of the English in no uncertain manner. "You air under arrest, for ze working against the interest of Valenian! You und'stand? You wish speak?"

Kerr laughed.

"Not to you," he said. "Someone important. Who sent you?"

Why on earth does he have to put the fellow's back up? moaned Loftus to himself; it seemed plain silly. The officer considered it much worse than silly, and his red face grew more beetroot in coloring. Certainly neither he nor Loftus understood that Kerr had deliberately angered him, for angry men would say things that calm ones would avoid. For once Kerr lost.

"The Kommandant! Ze Kommandant of ze mil-arry police! You will shoke vit' him pairhap! An' you!"—he swung round

snarling towards Loftus, and stepped to him. "You are ze great mistake! This man, he is ze spy! You—you are the travelsman, yes, for Germany! Germans, sey are ze goots. Ze Englis—pah! You know ze prisoner?"

Loftus took his cue quickly, and scowled towards Bob Kerr.

"Ach, I meet him here," he said gutturally, and with a beautiful simulation of a Teutonic accent. "I know nuddings else, mein Kapitlan."

The officer twirled his moustaches and smiled approvingly at an understanding German.

"So, you undair-stand—he is ze bads. Ze Englis, sey would not trade vit' Valenna, sey are all ze bads! Come!"

It was like a badly produced Hook of Holland, thought Loftus helplessly, but he saw Kerr's eyes turned towards the bedroom door. One thing was obvious: the military police had come for Kerr and Kerr alone, knowing nothing of Lois, and it was the one thing likely to make Kerr feel cheerful. He had given up hope of physical resistance, and there was an idea turning in his mind. Lois had been the bait once. Tryle once; it was his turn, after all. Loftus would cable Craigie immediately, and look after Lois, and he—

"This is absurd," he repeated, "but I shall advise the Kommandant of your insolence. Understand that please. You have a car outside?"

"My insol-ence! You would shoke again!" A clenched fist shook in front of Kerr's nose. "You vill shoke some less pairhap! Ze car, it ees waiting, an' you—you are undair arrest!"

"All right, let's get it over," Kerr stared coldly at Loftus, and started for the door. The two riflemen gripped his arms, but Kerr shook them off with an oath. The officer apparently decided there was no need to escort the prisoner so closely, and was beginning to feel worried. The prisoner had a disturbing confidence. That was the worst of the English; you could not understand them. To refuse to buy Valenian goods—pah, it was the insult!

With this crowd, Kerr thought, he would be safe from danger from one of Kryn's men. Kryn, of course, had been working, and this was partly the result. But why arrest only him, and not Lois? Shirin had known of the girl's complicity, and had expected to find her with Kerr.

Dusk was falling outside. With two riflemen and a uniformed driver, Kerr was bundled into a waiting car, and the officer sat beside him.

They were fifty yards from the Renol Hotel when Kerr caught a glimpse of a spindly fellow, something over six feet in height, who was walking with a Valenian girl, and apparently deep in thought. But as they grew nearer Kerr saw the thin man stop and stare. The woman dragged his arm, and they went on quickly, but Kerr felt more cheerful.

That was Oundle. Oundle would soon be with Loftus. Lois had plenty of company, and the next hour of two would be interesting, after that.

"Well, if Craigie could not look after his own and Kerr could not help himself, they would have to leave it to the Devil."

For the time being, thought Kerr an hour afterwards, it looked all odds on the Devil. He had been brought to the royal palace, but certainly not by the front entrance, and as certainly not to the first floor. In fact,

it was a basement, and it smelt. Was it possible that the word "dungeon" still had meaning in Valenna?

It was the nearest to one that Kerr had met, and he did not like it. Apart from the smell it was damp, and apart from the water there were indubitably rats. It was dark—but he had been left his matches and his cigarettes, although the automatic that the officer had taken away would look bad, and had given the fierce-looking fool high glee.

Kerr began to wish he had not taken his arrest so calmly. It was simple now to picture the heroics of making a break, and to imagine the efforts succeeding. It was one thing to take it easily and in the old-fashioned English way, but even that came to a nasty bump in a black hole, with little ventilation, wet walls, and rats for company.

War—war—war was in the offing!

Kerr began to feel savage. He could do nothing, and he ached to be up and doing. The one consolation was that he had already advised Craigie of the situation, and there were several and hearty agents in Haj ready to see the Princess.

What was she after?

One of these accursed mid-European coups, of course. But backed up by someone else, and someone Kerr could not identify.

His thoughts began to get chaotic. He ground a cigarette-stump under his heel, lit another, and then wished he had saved the match by lighting from the stump. Here, anyhow, he had rest for his foot and a chance of thinking clearly. There had been too much time for resting and thinking; perhaps that was what made him start pacing up and down the cell.

Obviously it had not been long empty. The rats were not shy. They scampered backwards and forwards, and they thought nothing of running over his feet. One tried to be too clever and get underneath. Its squealing, and the shock of treading on it, turned Kerr's stomach.

He sat down on the only seat, a three-legged stool, and found the stench of a sanitation hole overpowering. The stool was chained to the wall and he could not move it. These Valenians had an inverted sense of humor.

Supposing they forgot him?

Kerr laughed aloud again, and the harshness of the sound made the rats stop their scampering.

"My son," he said, "you'll be crazy in twenty-four hours at this rate. Forget it. Play a game with yourself."

He felt tired, very suddenly. His head lolled to his chest, and he felt the waves of sleep coming over him. He could afford to sleep. He had to sleep.

The next thing he knew, a hand was at his shoulder, and when he opened his eyes he was almost blinded by the glare from an unshaded lamp in the corridor outside the cell. Three of the beautifully-dressed officers were standing there, and two riflemen.

Kerr stood up, dazed and unsteady. His limbs felt cramped and his mouth was dry. He looked from one fierce face to the other, and just waited. The hand gripped his shoulder painfully, and he was half pushed and half carried out of the cell, and along a series of passages, which sloped upward.

The last one ended, not in a door, but after a sharp bend to the right, in a large room—if it could be called a room—furnished in the stark and simple fashion beloved of European military officials.

It was forty feet across, built on a circular plan, and there were five or six similar passages leading to it. In the middle was a long desk, and behind the desk a single man. About the walls were other desks, cleared for the night, and only the one fellow—probably the Kommandant of the cells, thought Kerr in a flowery moment—was on duty. By a large door on one side of the circular clearing were two of the stiff-looking riflemen.

Kerr was prepared to dislike the gentleman at the desk intensely.

In the first place, he saw only the top of a head, for the man was looking down on some papers. The top of the head was disconcerting, for it was bald. Not a single hair shone in the light of a shadeless lamp immediately above it.

Feeling the biggest fool in the world with his company of goose-stepping officers, Kerr reached the desk. The officers came sharply to attention. The riflemen grounded rifles. The echoing ceased, and the man with the bald head went on writing. Kerr wished he could smoke, but thought it unpolitic.

And then, with a sigh that could be heard plainly, the Kommandant—if it was the Kommandant—put down his pen and slowly raised his head. His eyes at first were narrowed, as though with weariness, but then they opened wider, and Kerr saw their expression. They were smiling, they were friendly, and the Kommandant pushed a box of cigarettes towards the Englishman.

"Ah, Mr. Kerr. Sit, please."

But Kerr was staring like a man who had seen a ghost. For it was the face of M. Jules Doriennet in front of him.

Kerr sat down. One of the officers had snapped an order, and a chair was pushed behind him, carefully, not roughly. The Kommandant's word was obviously law. He nodded to the crowd round Kerr, and they dropped back. He issued a command in Valkenian, and the riflemen marched towards the doors and disappeared, leaving only two on guard and one officer.

Kerr was getting over his shock. Doriennet! It was absurd, of course. Doriennet was quite dead, he himself had identified the body. And the man had had genuine black hair, not the kind that could be stuck on with hair-glue or spirit gum. This head had not been shaved, it was naturally hairless. The resemblance was lessening now. It had been just the shock, the sudden impression of looking at a dead man.

Kerr was glad of the cigarette, and he was feeling more alert and more rested.

"Well, Mr. Kerr?" The gaze was humorous, almost benevolent, and Kerr had a feeling that the Kommandant was amused. "I understand you have upset Lieutenant Davos."

"Davos? The man who came to the Renol?"

"The same."

"I would like to upset him more literally next time I see him," said Kerr.

The Kommandant smiled. What the devil was he looking so pleased about? wondered Kerr.

"You have no fears about getting free, Mr. Kerr?"

"I can't imagine the Government so ill-advised as to hold me for long," said Kerr dryly.

"No? You are, after all, a foreign agent."

"You seem to think so. But foreign agents, in times of peace, are allowed the dignity of a trial, Commander."

For the first time the other's expression of mild pleasure disappeared. He sighed, tapping a long cigarette—the Russian kind that Doriennet had favored in Kerr's flat—on the edge of his desk.

"In times of peace, yes. But you, doubtless, have heard the rumbles of revolution. Why else should you be here?"

Kerr shrugged. "You are assuming a great deal, surely?"

"There really is no need to act," smiled the Kommandant. His command of English was perfect, and his manners were more English than foreign. Kerr was beginning to think him a likeable man, and that had nothing to do with his probable actions in regard to Kerr: a man could kill you and still be likeable. "I know you well, Mr. Kerr. Craigie's men, unfortunately for him perhaps, are no longer able to hide with such secrecy. Some, of course, managed it. The better-known ones, such as yourself, suffer the inevitable penalty of fame—or, shall we say, notoriety? May I tell you, Mr. Kerr, that until two years ago I was in England? That I was employed by the Valkenian Intelligence Department, and that I know your excellent record? I have sometimes regretted being recalled, but they say I am getting old. But to-night is one occasion why I am glad I am sitting here. I have often wanted to meet you."

"Thanks," said Kerr dryly. "In better circumstances next time, I hope. By the way, a lager—"

"My dear man, yes. Hekt—der lager! Let us drop formalities, Kerr. When you came in and saw me, you had a shock?"

Kerr nodded.

"You are remarkably like—an acquaintance of mine."

"Ye-es. Poor Jules."

Kerr had the old feeling that he was being turned inside out, for Jules had been the Christian name of the dead Doriennet. The lager gave him a respite, and while he was drinking the other's eyes hardened.

"Jules, who died so unfortunately after seeing you, was my brother, Kerr. That enables you to understand a little?"

Kerr swallowed his beer more quickly than was good for him.

"A lot, Doriennet. I'm—sorry."

"About Jules? It was, I suppose, inevitable. If the poor fellow had only told me, instead of trying to deal with it himself—well, a great deal might have been done. He wrote, saying he was going to see you, and I heard of his murder, of course. As it is, we are in an unfortunate position, you no more than me, Kerr. I have mentioned the rumbles of revolution. They are distressingly near. Every time the door opens I wonder whether it is to announce the new order of things. As a military man, of course, I will be assumed to support the ruling Government. If it is a peaceful revolution—that might be, but I am afraid of trouble, Kerr, just as you are. I cannot imagine how Valkenian will avoid it now. Things have reached too bad a pass."

Kerr, asking himself whether he was dreaming on the chair, shrugged his shoulders.

"You doubtless know more about it than me."

"Ye-es. Your point of interest lies only in the effect on England, of course. Well, Kerr, a word of explanation. A statement was made—and sworn to, as I believe, you say—to the effect that you were plotting against the Government. The alleged facts were too grave for us to do anything but

order your arrest. I was not on duty, as it happened, and I sent for you as soon as possible. The officers who were sent to the hotel knew nothing, of course, of your position—your true position. They are very fierce in their patriotism, I fear, but perhaps that is as well. And now I am in the invidious position of having to ask one of my political prisoners for information which, as I have been on the spot all the time, I should have myself. You understand, I am sure?"

The vague pictures of third degree that had flitted through Kerr's mind when he had been shut in the cell returned, and he had to laugh. Doriennet looked politely puzzled, and Kerr was asking himself what the man would do if he refused to talk. This had gone on far too smoothly.

"Sorry, Doriennet. But—supposing I don't, or can't, answer? What happens?"

Doriennet waved his hands.

"I had not considered the possibility, Kerr. I give you my assurance that I have one thing in mind only, to stop the revolution. I have discovered many of the people who are working for it. I know that the whole Meggel party is ready to take up arms. I know that Count Vonath's Nazi group will jump into a battle as quickly. The revolution waits only for the match . . ."

He broke off, inquiring, inviting. Kerr was trying to convince himself that the man was wholly sincere. Certainly he was Doriennet's brother, and the revolutionaries—if the break came—had murdered Jules Doriennet.

"Well—what exactly do you want to know, Kommandant?"

Doriennet smiled quickly.

"Excellent! I had imagined, Kerr, you would not allow your rough handling to prejudice you. One forgets oneself in these things. Well, I have discovered small-arms factories, and broken them. I have found ammunition-dumps and confiscated them. A dozen, perhaps, in all. I know that your countryman, Criff, was in it. I know that Prell was mixed up in it. All these things have come to light since Prell's assassination. But I do not know who is behind it, and I must. The three party leaders? I do not think so. Meggel will fight, but he is a fanatic. Paul Vonath is a shouting fool. Nestal Silf, if not a genius, is a diplomat, and a true diplomat these days wishes for peace. So it is someone outside. Some country. Which one, Kerr?"

Kerr was very wide awake now.

"Which one?—I'd like to know, Kommandant. But you talk as though you are sure it is an outsider."

For the first time Doriennet the soldier looked annoyed. Kerr saw the anger in those blue eyes.

"Kerr, I had assumed you would talk . . ."

So he had no idea of Katrina, Kerr thought slowly.

The man was genuine. He was friendly towards Kerr. He was an ex-spy, and he knew that Kerr and Craigie worked for peace. He was on Kerr's side.

"I've just decided that I will talk," said Kerr slowly, "but I'll repeat the question. You're sure it's someone outside?"

"Ach, it must be!"

Kerr was nodding slowly.

"In a way, yes. But the mainspring is here. The Prince, Doriennet?"

The Kommandant had pushed his chair back, and was now leaning forward and gripping his desk with both hands.

"The Prince—madness! He is weak, he is hated. No one would follow the Prince. Vonath, Meggel, Silf, they all have their

supporters, but the wretched Renol—no one!"

Kerr said very slowly:
"Is there any other personality connected with the throne who might win public favor? Who might get supporters from—the army, the police, from all parties? As if, for instance, Renol was popular and wanted to set up a dictator State, with himself as dictator? Can you think of anyone?"

Doriennet was staring, his eyes very prominent.
"Kerr—you know something. You know. The—Princess?"

"I think," said Kerr, "that I can very nearly prove it. Listen, Doriennet."
He talked quickly for five minutes. He knew that Doriennet was incredulous at first, but was slowly convinced. He learned afterwards that Kryn was the Princess' personal adviser; he knew, of course, that Katrina had travelled all over the world, and that year she had spent a great deal of time in the Tyrol.

"Accessible," exclaimed Doriennet excitedly, "to both Russia and Germany. She is in the pay of one or the other! She can win the people; they love Katrina. She has been badly treated, so they are her friends. Even I—But, Kerr, there must be something else!"

"There's probably something else," said Kerr, "but Katrina's leading it here. I—"
He heard the rumbling of feet outside, he saw the riflemen jump towards the door. A word was shouted, another came from the other side of the door.

The door was unlocked and Kerr and Doriennet, on their feet, saw the fierce-looking Lieutenant Davos rush in. Davos with his uniform torn almost to ribbons. Davos with a wicked wound over his right eye. Davos, whom Kerr admired in that moment.

"Kommandant—it has come! The revolution. They are attacking the palace! They are firing—at the House of Representatives. They are mad, Kommandant! It is the end of us all!"

"If had come!"
The revolution in Vallena that Kerr and Craig had foreseen and so desperately tried to stop. That Doriennet had seen and worked against, which the three parties of the House had been half-afraid to face and yet half-welcomed.

It was happening.

The next five minutes passed like a nightmare to Kerr, a crazy kaleidoscope of the impossible. Davos had seemed to forget the pig of an Englishman was a political prisoner, had run alongside him, with the Kommandant and two riflemen slightly ahead. Kerr had had time to get his automatic from Doriennet's desk, and more than time to wonder whether the rubble would get to the Renol Hotel.

They reached a wide flight of stairs, carved out of stone, telling Kerr why no sounds had penetrated the underground room beneath the military quarters of the castle. As they hurried up the stairs they heard an occasional rifle shot, while in the background was a murmuring like distant thunder. Three or four men passed them with clothes torn like Davos's, their heads or hands bleeding, and as they neared the end of the long passage at the head of the stairs the sounds grew louder, a low menacing note, and there was the sharp tap-tap of a machine-gun.

Kerr had no time to notice the spaciousness of the main hall of that section of the star-shaped castle, its tapestries, its heavy furniture. He saw the crowd of

men by the doors, and the rough barricade that had been thrown up. Men were still working on it, and behind a priceless settle a machine-gunner was entrenched, pouring lead into the attacking forces.

There would be no peaceful revolution in Vallena.

Kerr could scarcely remember afterwards how he continued to make his way from the Palace back to the Renol Hotel... through chaos, through a mob white-hot with the lust of slaughter—through nightmare scenes to appal the most hardened. Carnage, torture—then the Palace guns, more and more persistent.

Nightmare... eternally... then at last he saw it ahead.

The Renol—oh, heaven, the Renol. Its neon sign was still flaring. He drew nearer; he saw a dozen men and women entering. Ragged, bestial-looking, still maddened.

Kerr quickened his step. He forgot what he had been through, yet thought that his right leg felt weaker than it should. The ankle was paining him badly.

He reached the doorway.
Inside, the attendants and commissionaires had made no attempt at resistance, and the looting might have been a lot worse.

The lift was jammed. He went upstairs as quickly as he could make his legs carry him. He passed laughing, yelling crowds of the proletariat, now and again a man or woman surrounded by them.

Kerr reached suite thirty.
He hesitated a second before he went in. What would he find? The place stripped by the mob, or...

He pushed open the door, swearing to himself, and then he stood on the threshold. The door was unlatched, the room was untouched. And in an easy-chair, staring towards him with a comical expression of surprise was the thin and spindly Oundle, leaning back, with a glass in one hand, a cigar in the other.

There was a moment of startled silence. Kerr's more of relief than anything. Oundle's of stupefaction. Kerr closed the door quietly as Oundle said in a ready voice: "Good Lord, you want a bath!"

For the first time Kerr felt anger rising at the inanities of the men of Department 2. And then he sat down heavily on a chair and laughed. Oundle, moving quickly and looking spidery, with his long legs and arms and his spindly body, proved an expert with the decanter.

Kerr drank deeply and heavy footsteps sounded outside the passage. He felt too leg-weary to worry.

"Where's Lois?"

"She's all right. With Bill," Oundle turned his head away as he spoke, but Kerr noticed nothing. "Messy outside?"

"Looks like being messy inside soon. The mob's got the upper hand, and—"

Oundle walked slowly to the door and locked it. With the same air of detachment he hugged a heavy settee and placed it behind the door; his strength was surprising, and he talked as he worked. It was a new experience for Kerr to sit down and watch someone else busy.

"It won't last for long, old man. The military's coming. Not a doubt about it. Baj'll be under martial law in a couple of hours. Fact. Less, probably. Quite an army coming down from the hills. They're waiting for the air-paid shock to pass, and then—they'll cut through the mob like cheese. Soft cheese. What about that bath?"

"Don't play the fool," Kerr said. "I'm past it. You've been gathering a lot of information, Ned."

"Habit," Oundle grinned, his face widening up like an old man's. "I'm serious about the bath, though; you can't possibly go anywhere or do anything like that, and I fancy we'll have to be busy soon. Make you feel better, too. Shall I turn on the water? It was still running hot five minutes ago."

"What's the matter with me?" asked Kerr irritably, and he eased himself up from his chair and made his way unsteadily towards the bedroom. It was difficult to understand why his legs felt so weak and his head so dizzy, for sitting down he had felt all right. The mob was still tramping the corridors, and someone tried the handle of the outside door. For a moment Ned Oundle put his hand in his pocket, but the rattling stopped and the heavy feet passed on.

"Spirit's going," he said. "They've had wind of the army, I expect."

Kerr reached the wardrobe and opened it to look at himself in the full-length mirror. Oundle grinned as Kerr stepped back a pace in surprise. If Lois had seen him like that she would have given him up for lost.

Oundle started to make a joke, and realised what Kerr must have seen and been through. The thin man was unusually silent as Kerr bathed, the warmth and the cleanliness making him feel more normal.

"Well—where's Lois? And Bill?" he demanded.
"They went off soon after I arrived," Oundle said. "Phoned through twenty minutes ago—most of the exchanges are all right, thank heaven—to say they're out of the crush and there's nothing to worry about. Loftus got a clout, Lois escaped scot-free. But if you're ready to take it, old son—"

Again Kerr failed to notice the significance of the sparing news Oundle gave him of Lois.

"What do you know?" he demanded.

Oundle sat on the edge of the bath and swung a loofah thoughtfully.

"Don't know why, Bob, but things came to a head to-day. Bill and I couldn't find much yesterday. All quiet everywhere, and talk of the rebellion, of course. Just where, and why it was going to start, no one seemed to know. The two extreme parties were snarling, and—"

"Don't hedge, blast you! What's happened?"

Oundle stopped swinging the loofah.

"This, Bob. Meggel's party has been induced to revolt, the army was taken out of the city, and only the military police and the ordinary Roberts were left in. Everything in proper order, no one knew why, or what was coming. Word got to the Meggel crowd that the city was there for the asking. They asked. As soon as they got busy the military sent the bombing planes, and at the same time the army started marching. It'll be the worst massacre since— heaven knows when. The orders are to spare no one—men, women and children. They're wiping out the Socialists in Baj, and then—"

Oundle was talking like an automaton, his face deadly pale, for he contemplated the next twenty-four hours. "Then—Katrina steps in. She takes over altogether, playing on two notes. First, the bloodshed must stop—and she puts herself in good with the Meggel crowd outside Baj. There won't be anyone much left inside. Second, conditional on the stopping of the killing, she

puts the Nazi party in power, herself as dictator. She has Vallena where she wants it, so I'm told. Following?"

Kerr was stepping out of the bath and reaching for a towel.

"The murderous little beast. Any chances of stopping it?"

"Can't see any."

"Is she getting any outside support?"

"Money, as far as I can find out. Can't get any further than that, Bob."

Kerr towelled his back vigorously. Now he was clean, his bruised forehead and the slight cuts in his cheek, as well as a mass of red bruises over his back and shoulders where the crowd had clubbed at him, showed clear and angry.

"You can't, eh? Nor can I, Ned, but it's there. She's worked for the break with England, and Kryn was definitely out for Craigie and me. Not just in case we butted in, either."

"I don't know—"

"Hand me those trunks and the singlet," said Kerr. "The military force coming down is entirely Valentinian?"

"As far as I've heard."

"How'd you get all this?"

Oundie grinned.

"The pretty you saw me with is the latest fancy of Count Paul Vonath. Vonath was told what to do this morning, and he had to tell her, talkative little braggart."

"Fine," said Kerr, and then he scowled. "Now, where're Lois and Bill? Where are they? Hiding out, or—"

Oundie gulped.

"Not so's you'd know it. It was Lois' fault. She's gone all proletarian, reckons they're having a crooked deal — and she's right—and maybe if Katrina isn't able to pull her tricks it'll end differently. The Army's with the Kat, and so—"

"I—see. Where've they gone?"

"Kat's castle," said Oundie quickly. "I couldn't stop her, old boy, and Loftus seemed better company for her than me. Bigger, somehow. Well—"

"Kat's castle," said Kerr very slowly. "Come on; hang it, what are you waiting for? Come on!"

He had little idea of what to do, but he recognised one thing. Lois was right. The only way to stop the easy triumph of the Vonath and Nazi party was to get at Katrina. If she was missing, the Army would be at sixes and sevens. Kerr saw it clearly, and his admiration for Lois went up by leaps and bounds; and as it did so, his hopes for her safety diminished. She was in Katrina's palace. Kryn would be there—von Hauf and others. And . . .

He was dressed and ready. Oundie lugged the suitcase away and opened the door cautiously. From below came the rumble of the revolution was still coming.

And then from the streets came an unfamiliar sound. Of marching. Orderly and regular, somehow remorseless. A roar pitched on a higher note than before, a rabble of people rushing along the road, and on the pavement Kerr saw the hotels of the quarter emptying of their unusual guests, saw the crowd rushing away, and—on a hill to the right—the long, swinging columns of the military, with the mounted troops riding first in a solid mass.

"Down here!" Oundie was darting towards a small alleyway, as yet sparsely peopled. Kerr followed him, and a hundred yards behind them the crowd tried to squeeze in; but the mounted cavalry were there, and the second massacre had started.

Kerr knew there could be nothing to stop

the night of horror, that Baj was a city of the dead. But they might stop it spreading, they had to stop it spreading.

There could never be any doubt that the guards of Katrina's palace had been forewarned. The barricades there were formidable and the mob had hardly touched it; perhaps Katrina's popularity in Baj accounted for that. Within a quarter of a mile of the scene of that dreadful massacre the half-moon-shaped building seemed quiet and unaffected. Guards were lined behind the barricades, but there was no shooting.

"Lois got through," Oundie said, "by asking for Kryn. Do we follow?"

"I'd like to know another way," said Kerr. It was astonishingly easy. They asked for Kryn, and were allowed to pass the barricades.

They went up the spacious hall, where Kryn had gone the night of his return from England. The guards knocked on the black door, where two other riflemen were standing. There was a sharp call, and the door opened. Kerr, keeping his hands in sight, went through in front of Oundie. He knew it was a trick; he guessed he was walking into the trap, and yet . . .

He saw the last thing he expected to see: Kryn, Lois, and Bill Loftus. Two or three higher officials—and two women. Two women in that room of black, two women dressed in black.

The one was Katrina of Baj. The other . . .

They were not doubles, any more than the two Doriennets were doubles, but in a quick glance the similarity was startling. Katrina of Baj and Lady Mondell.

The black, furnishing the subdued light, the quietness inside the room, all increased the effect of a tableau. Kerr and Oundie went inside. The silence was broken for a moment by the clicking of the door as the escort went out. Kerr was a yard in front of Oundie, and both men were standing still. Kerr had flashed a single glance towards Lois, and then he looked at the Princess.

Yes, she was beautiful.

"So—you are Kerr?"

"I am Kerr, madam. You sent for me?"

Katrina's smile widened.

"That is good, Mr. Kerr. I knew, of course, you would come. In a way I sent for you, but for you to admit it—that is diplomacy at its best. You are, after all, something of what your reputation says." Kerr's eyes held a spark of humor.

"Perhaps more than something, madam."

"Who knows?" She was a match for him in words. Kerr thought, yet more significantly she was on tenterhooks, just as he was, yet without any apparent reason, for the whole situation was in her hands. Kerr had known that when he had come, and yet . . .

The impossible did happen sometimes.

"Now that I'm here," Kerr said, "what can I do for you?"

She shook her head slowly. None of the others moved or spoke, but Kerr saw that Rene Mondell's eyes were moving quickly to and fro. She was afraid of something.

"Nothing, Mr. Kerr. I will not pretend that I have arranged this for a discussion of business. Your activities make you far too dangerous. It is sad, but—"

Kerr smiled widely, and the transfiguring effect had never been more marked.

"I'd heard, of course, that you had made arrangements for my murder, madam, but unfortunately"—he shrugged—"some of

us are hard to kill. It's born in the blood, and it makes us fatalists."

"I am glad it failed," said Katrina. "I wanted to meet you. Your career in the air had my warm admiration, and when I learned you had joined the Secret Service I was more than intrigued. I could almost wish that our paths had not crossed."

"And prevented this meeting, madam?" Kerr chose his words carefully, and there was a good-humored expression on his face, as though he was deliberately humoring Katrina of Baj. "I shall always be glad."

"Always need not be long, Mr. Kerr."

Kerr chuckled this time, and the sound seemed a sacrilege. His voice was deeper.

"More murder talk? Haven't you killed enough for one day, madam? Or aren't you killing enough?"

"Brave words, and to be expected. Luckily your fatalism makes you unafraid, Mr. Kerr. At least I can assure you, and your friends, of a speedy death."

"We're lucky," Kerr said dryly. "I was out with the crowd, madam, during the bombing—your bombing. Death does not always come quickly, even from the skies. But aren't you forgetting that we are British subjects?"

Katrina's smile took on a tigerish expression.

"So. It will be most unfortunate that you suffered in the rebellion that Katrina tried to put down, Mr. Kerr. Even the new Government can hardly be held responsible for the activities of the rebels. You over-estimate the prestige of the English, of course. That has always been an English mistake."

"I wonder. Two can under-estimate, madam. My cable to my headquarters explaining the full situation and my own trip to the Princess' palace might make strange reading."

Katrina frowned at that: it was odd how men and women in high position assumed that everything would work out just as they had planned.

"You are too venturesome, Kerr. But you cannot prove that you reached the palace, and—"

Kerr laughed, apparently with real humor. Old friend bluff was helping him well.

"My dear Princess, I am not the only representative of England in Baj, nor are my friends. There are plenty of others. I was seen to enter, and by now the word will have gone out. Not by cable, of course."

"By air. My agents will be on the way, and the distressing truth will reach England. England does not always sit back."

He saw a different woman now. Her eyes were blazing with a hate that was close to fanaticism.

"You fool! If England starts she will be facing world war! Have you not the sense to know that? Have you not learned that Moscow is racing to Maggel's help—the fools! Do you know what is coming? England—pahi! She dares not come in!"

A little pulse was ticking in Kerr's forehead. The trick had come off this time; he had angered her and she was talking, but the news was going to be little use to him. He was here, but how he had ever thought it possible to get out was beyond him.

"A matter that the Government can best settle, madam. May I congratulate you on the thoroughness of your arrangements? A rebellion, a Vallena unfitted under you for a day, and then an attack from Russia? And your allies? I need hardly ask. A triumph

indeed for your Vornath party; but I am wondering whether your allies will be as faithful to you after your country is sold as it is now. And I wonder whether you have contemplated the possibility of Moscow winning? It is so easy to assume the best, madam—"

He was thinking as he talked, and the idea, conceived when he had seen the two women, so alike and yet unlike, was taking shape.

Katrina was breathing faster.

"How you talk, Kerr! You forget things, too. You forget how I hate Vallena, how the Prince has treated me, how I have been insulted and spurned. Popular, they say? Only because they hate the Prince! And in the new Ba! how shall I last? They will kill me, Kerr, they will assassinate me when the new order of things has come—those whom I am helping, those in whose interests—she laughed, mockingly—"I am starting this war. You are beginning to see?"

"You take the words out of my mouth," said Kerr. He knew now, of course, what she was planning to do.

She stood up suddenly, and she looked superb.

"So. And I have made arrangements, Kerr, you understand? It will not be safe for Katrina to live after this. And I care nothing for Ba! for Vallena. So—after to-night—they will find me dead. You see that? They will think I am dead, they will have no fears. But I shall live, and she

"No. No!" Rene was on her feet, deathly white, but no one took the slightest notice of her. Kerr's eyes were very narrow as he looked at Katrina, and for the first time his smile completely disappeared. He looked startled, beaten, afraid. The Princess was lifting her hands a little with delight.

"You see, Kerr!"

"Yes, I see." He spoke like a tired man. "Well—it's over, I suppose? I can't buy you off—"

"So! Kerr changes his tune, so quickly! I am a little disappointed, Mr. Kerr."

"Perhaps you are, but you needn't be," Kerr said. "You are selling your country, you are murdering thousands, you have risked putting Europe at war. The only thing I haven't discovered," he added slowly, "is why you arranged that absurd business with the English trade. Why upset England? Oh, it's not important—"

Katrina laughed. Kryn opened his mouth for the first time, as though to persuade her not to speak, but he stepped back. Katrina was laughing into Kerr's face.

"Absurd, Kerr? Unimportant, Kerr? How little you know, how badly you have failed to maintain that reputation! Kerr, the reason for the interruption of trade with England is simple: the Vornath party. The Nazi party, and the anti-Moscow party. You see?"

"Oh, what's the use of talking?" snapped Kerr.

"But I will talk!" Her voice rang out, filled with triumph. "You will listen to me, understand! The trade is useless now to England. Your big financiers, will they wish to help Vallena, a country no longer important to them? They will not! They will be quiet. They will eat their words, they will talk of sanctions, of piracy, of small things, and Vallena will be overpowered by Moscow. I will be dead, they think, and

"Well," said Kerr slowly, "it's pretty big, Katrina. I think you stand an excellent chance of success. Excellent, that is, but for one thing."

"What is that one thing, Kerr?"

Kerr chuckled, and smoothed his coat lapel with his right hand. The hand rested near the button-hole for a moment, and the atmosphere had grown dreadfully tense. Kerr glanced just once towards Loftus, trying to send a message.

And then his hand moved like lightning to his shoulder holster, replenished at the Renol.

"But for this!" roared Kerr.

He ducked as he fired. Loftus had pushed Lois backwards, Oundle was quite still, stupefied. Kryn and the guards swept their guns out, but Kerr's first bullet found Katrina's head, the second Kryn's shoulder. Loftus was in front of Lois, his bullets streaming towards the guards, fire coming back both ways. Kerr felt one—two—three sharp jabs in his arm, near the top, but as they came he saw the officers tottling.

There was heavy banging on the door of the room. Voices raised, more footsteps thudding.

Rene Mondell was stretched across the desk, her eyes wide, the mask of terror still there. Kerr jumped towards her, his left arm hanging limp.

"Listen—listen! Go to the door, tell them it is all right—just say: 'Faita rienta, Faita rienta.' They'll think you're Katrina! You can do it—"

Oundle was by the door, touching the handle, and the din outside was growing worse. Kerr dragged Rene Mondell from the desk, with desperation in his heart; and then he realised suddenly what might make her act:

"Falling died for this. Falling—"

It seemed like thunder outside: the voices were hoarse; only the knowledge that it was Princess Katrina's chamber stopped the guards from breaking the door down. And suddenly, when Kerr had given up the slim hope, sanity came to Rene Mondell's eyes.

"All right. 'Faita rienta.'"

Kerr let her go.

Loftus was dragging Kryn from the floor towards a corner. Lois was standing in front of the bowed head of the Prince who had seen power and money in setting the nations at one another's throats. The officers were sprawled behind the door, out of sight. When the door opened the men in the passage would see Rene Mondell—and think, please God, that she was Katrina—and Lois by the table; nothing else.

Oundle opened the door as Rene reached it.

She drew herself up superbly, and the haughty arrogance of her expression was perfect. A big, uniformed man was there, half-way in the room. He saw Katrina and jumped back in surprise.

"Faita rienta."

It was Katrina's nounce, Katrina's voice. The man saluted sharply, and muttered something in Vallenaian. Rene lifted her right hand towards the unseen Oundle, and he closed the door slowly.

The tension inside grew. There was silence outside until Kerr took a step towards Rene Mondell, his eyes gleaming.

"Perfect! They're off for a bit, but now we've got to get away. After we've phoned Craigie—"

He knew, and perhaps excepting Rene they all knew, what would happen if the message were intercepted. But it had to be tried. The five of them could die if it meant Craigie could be informed and the work of prevention started.

Would the call never come?

It had been nerve-racking as Rene had lifted the telephone, and, coached by Kerr, asked for that familiar London number, Whitehall 12121-8. The exchange had muttered something back and Rene had replaced the telephone.

They would hardly expect her to hok on while they were getting London.

Kerr cursed the fact that there were no windows. There were two other doors besides that leading to the passage, but he dared risk no sorties until the call was through. He was sweating hard, while Lois was saying in a matter-of-fact voice:

"Your arm, Bob—is it much?"

"No, it's all right, old girl—they just nicked me."

Between them she and Loftus had his coat off. There were three bullet-holes, and two bullets, and two bullets had certainly hit the bone.

Kerr, half-occupied with stifling the pain from the impromptu cleaning of his arm, and half with straining for the first tinkle of the telephone, was dead-white and perspiring. Then the telephone rang. Kerr wrenched himself away, and could hardly wait for Rene Mondell to lift the receiver. She said something in English, after a pause, and turned to Kerr. Her face was vivid with hope. "It's—Mr. Craigie."

Kerr grabbed the telephone and caught Craigie's slow:

"Who is that? Who—"

"Hold everything," Kerr snapped, with out introducing himself. "Can you hear me?"

"Right, Bob." Craigie would have picked that voice out of a thousand. "You all right?"

"Craigie, it's started over here. It's a beautiful set-up to put Berlin and Moscow at work, and you've got to scotch it. Listen—"

Craigie listened, without making a comment. Kerr was speaking quickly, feverishly, half-afraid that they would be cut off.

"I've got it," Craigie said quickly. "I'll send messages to the ambassadors in Berlin, and Moscow, and I'll get Whitart over at once. You're in time, Bob. But you?"

"Eh? Oh, I'm all right," said Kerr in apparent surprise. "Be seeing you."

He rang down and looked half-stupidly at the others.

"Oad," said Kerr, "couldn't I manage a beer. Eh?" He laughed, a little too loudly. "Well, let's get through into those other rooms. Be caught in here if we're not careful. I—"

He broke off.

The others swung round towards the door, for the tapping came very clearly. Kerr swallowed hard as it came again, sharp and imperative.

"By the doors," he snapped to the others. They retreated, a man and a woman by each of the far doors. Kerr took his second automatic from his coat pocket and went towards the passage door. His pulse was beating fast, he wished he had used Lady Mondell again.

"Ontra!"

The door opened slowly at first, and Kerr, behind it, saw the man who was entering. "Tell the guards to clear off!"

He hardly knew how he managed to speak

plainly, to think clearly. He certainly did not realise that the scared newcomer gave the order, entered—with Kerr's gun a foot away from him—and closed the door. The man knew that he was facing death.

Kerr was muttering his name. "Horn. Matthew Horn, eh? Well, Horn—"

Matthew Horn advanced a step into the room, and saw the dead bodies as well as the English couples by the opposite doors. He was conscious of an increasing pain in his chest, and started to speak:

"It was you, little man; but we can talk afterwards. Were you coming to get away with Katrina and Kryn?"

"Yes—"

"How?"

"There's a plane on the roof. Katrina's sports plane. Waiting. But—"

"All things considered, you'd better lead the way," said Kerr slowly. "You know it?"

Horn nodded, his odd-shaped moustache very clear against his white face, his thick-set body sagging. The gun moved forward from Kerr's hand.

"Through the main passages?"

"No—no. Through—her bedroom."

"Where did they keep their papers?"

"They—they're packed. On top. All ready. I've just seen—von Hauf up there. He's waiting."

"And a pilot?"

"No-o. Katrina—was going—"

"Remember, the gun's very close, little man. Very close," said Kerr.

"Bob," said Lois, "you're all in. Leave it to the others."

Kerr cocked his head on one side, and his smile was faint, but his eyes were gleaming.

"I—Oh, all right. But make it fast. I wish Trale—"

"We can't worry about any of them," said Lois quickly. "You'll need those papers to prove the case, and you've got to get away. Come on, man."

She had his right arm firmly. His left was stabbing at him as though a hot poker was pushed in and out of the wound. In a dash, Kerr saw Loftus poke his gun into Horn's ribs. In a dash he followed the others, through Katrina's bedroom, without noticing its lofty spaciousness and its luxury, to a small staircase that seemed to trip him up at every step. Oundle was helping from behind; he went up, up, up, until the cool night air came to meet him from some unseen door.

The cool air steadied Kerr, and he saw the portly, stupefied von Hauf there with Oundle's gun in his ribs.

The roof was flat, giving room for a short take-off run. The plane was inside its white stone hangar—the plane of the play-girl princess of Baj.

Oundle was useful at the controls, but none of the others was capable of handling a plane now that Kerr was off duty. It was large enough, a seven-seater. Room for them all. Kerr wished Trale was with them. It did not seem right to be going back without Trale.

Oundle was fiddling with the controls, and Horn was stepping inside, when Loftus heard the sound.

It came from behind him. He swung round, and as he moved a bullet hummed out. It smashed into the wing of the monoplane, but before the man lurking in the shadows could fire again, Loftus had him twice through the chest.

He toppled forward, into plain sight. The moment of fear had come and gone in a

flash. Lois Dacre jumped towards the door, for she was nearer than the others. In the light she saw the pug-featured face of a man who had once pestered the brigade captain at the fire at Devnet Court. He was lying very still.

And for the first time Matthew Horn seemed to realise what was happening and what he was doing. He muttered under his breath, and Kerr heard the same name several times. Sam—Sam—Sam!

Kerr realised suddenly who it was; but Loftus had left the man, and was in the plane—it had an automatic starter and the propellers did not want turning.

Freddie Kingham's no-good brother Sam, of course. He had been in it, with his father and his uncle. Apparently Freddie Kingham was the only member of the Camberley household clear of guilt.

But was he?

The engines roared.

Oundle nursed them for a few seconds, and then eased off the brakes. The monoplane went forward slowly, into space. In a few moments the ravaged city was beneath them, speckled with the lights of a thousand fires. Horrors beyond words were down there.

It was four days before the alarms were finally over and Europe settled down. In Vallena, neither Meggel nor Vonath had gained the upper hand, and the old patriarch Nestal Silf was restoring order. Neither of the extreme parties could rely on outside help, and that took them by surprise. The bloodshed was finished, Katrina was dead, the truth was published.

Craigie had odds and ends to clear up in England.

He learned from Matthew Horn, who had given away completely, that he had been the instigator of the trouble, but at the time of his arrest, and Kryn's attempt to fasten the blame for Doriennet's murder on him, Kryn had not known that he had been working for some time with Katrina; Kryn had believed Horn to be an associate of Criff's, and had planned to render him innocuous. Bennet's remorse and suicide had saved Kryn from a gigantic blunder.

Horn had put his finger on the one vital factor. With English commercial interests inimical to Vallena, pressure could—and would—have been brought to bear on the British Government to ensure non-intervention. Horn had known the powers of financial interest.

Indirectly—through Criff—Horn had put the proposition to Kryn, who had found Katrina an easy listener—Katrina, who had grown to hate her country and the English, and to lust for power.

Horn had sent that telephone message to Craigie and, earlier, had sent for Doriennet, giving precise instructions for his journey. Doriennet had not been to England before. Horn had killed the Vallonian, but had been prevented by the untimely arrival of the clear from hiding the body. Freddie's discovery had jeopardised the whole scheme.

With a thorough knowledge of international espionage Kryn had decided that Kerr and Craigie threatened most danger. Had he not talked of Kerr when Jules Doriennet had overheard him, it might have ended differently.

In England, Kryn had put Criff up as the dupe, centring all attention and—he had hoped—suspicion on the man who had already played so important a part in international quarrels. The character of Horn's nephew, Samuel Kingham, had given him an opportunity for forcing Samuel and

Joshua Kingham to work for him. The older Kingham had found it easy money.

The rest of the English gang had been assembled slowly, kept there for the emergency that might one day break out. Kryn had hoped to pick Kerr off quietly. Doriennet's visit to Kerr had started the side's turn.

Bettin had received a report that Horn was working with Katrina; but Kryn had learned of it, killed Bettin's informant, and then murdered the Foreign Secretary in his own room.

Katrina's idea of changing identities with Rene Mondell had been one of the ugliest facets of the affair, Craigie thought. It had been lucky that Rene had fallen in love with Falling. Well, Rene was free now, Sir Douglas Mondell had committed suicide when the news had been spread of the real Katrina's death. Von Hauf—the financial wizard of the group—and Horn were to be tried by an international court, sitting in camera; they would hang, of course. Samuel Kingham had followed Mondell's example, and Freddie Kingham would find himself Horn's next-of-kin.

Just three weeks after the flight from Baj, Kerr left hospital. He felt oddly dissatisfied, and yet experienced a peculiar happiness. Lois was close to his right side, and his left sleeve was empty.

Well, it finished him with the department, and if Lois wanted to change her mind he would face it.

He said "if" again when they reached 77g Brook Street, and Lois' answer was more than blunt.

"If you keep on, Bob, you'll have me howling. Do I mind if you've one arm or two, one leg or two? Don't I remember how you lost it? And it keeps us out of the game, Bob. I don't think I could stand it again. You'll—you'll miss it, but the Burkes were once in the same boat, and they—"

"Sorry," said Kerr. He put his right arm about her shoulders, and she strained towards him. So much that Mold, who was getting almost the perfect man-servant, coughed discreetly.

"Mr. Trale, sir, Mr. Oundle, and Mr. Loftus. And—Lady Mondell, sir."

"Show 'em in," said Kerr stepping back quickly. "Our time, later, Lois, and—"

"All right, we won't stay long," smiled Dodo Trale.

Mold brought in beer, professionally, and with tankards.

"Well, folk," said Kerr some minutes later, "the toast is to the finest bit of acting I've ever seen or heard. 'Faita riental!'"

When the toast had been drunk, Rene Mondell looked from Kerr to Lois and said: "It's absurd, but I still don't know what it means."

Kerr chuckled.

"I thought it meant 'it's nothing' once. Apparently, its more literal meaning is, 'go and kill yourself.' When all's said and done, it's lucky Katrina was feared and respected in her palace, but I hope the poor devil didn't go and obey orders. By the way—he was still smiling, but he spoke more seriously—"I had a letter from the other Doriennet this morning. He caught one in the chest, but he's pulling through."

There was a moment's silence, and then: "The toast," said Bill Loftus quietly, "the Doriennets—the past and the present."

THE END.

(All characters in this novel are fictitious, and have no reference to any living person.)

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